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The Impact of Social Media: Instagram VS Online Site Reviews on Hotels' Client Quality Perception

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Master in Management

Supervisor:
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ISCTE – Instituto Universitário de Lisboa

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BUSINESS SCHOOL

Department of Marketing, Strategy and Operations

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Resumo

Esta dissertação insere-se na área de Marketing, mais especificamente na área de Social Media Marketing. O Social Media Marketing tem vindo a ser cada vez mais estudado, uma vez que este canal de comunicação tem ganho mais notoriedade, devido à influência que consegue ter nos clientes.

O objetivo desta pesquisa é investigar a influência que o Social Media tem na perceção da qualidade das unidades hoteleiras por parte dos clientes da Geração Y. Ao mesmo tempo, pretende-se estudar a comparação entre a influência que as Online Site Reviews vs Instagram têm nos clientes, bem como explorar os diferentes impactos que o Social Media apresenta na perceção dos indivíduos que já possuem rendimentos próprios e os indivíduos que apenas influenciaram outros potenciais clientes.

Para obter os resultados, foram utilizados dois métodos de pesquisa, quantitativo e qualitativo. Através do questionário aplicado a 373 indivíduos da Geração Y, pode-se concluir que o Social Media tem efetivamente um impacto na perceção de qualidade destes indivíduos. Os Online Site Reviews têm um impacto mais evidente do que o Instagram, embora os consumidores também sejam influenciados pelo conteúdo presente neste. Acrescenta-se ainda que dentro da geração estudada, quem não tem autonomia financeira, muda a sua perceção de qualidade com mais facilidade.

A entrevista, aplicada a três profissionais da Indústria Hoteleira, permitiu inferir que o Social Media apresenta um elevado e visível impacto nos clientes, tendo sido considerado o Instagram mais relevante na formação da perceção de qualidade.

Palavras-Chave: Social Media, canais de comunicação, Indústria Hoteleira, Hotéis e Perceção de qualidade.

JEL Classification System: M31 Marketing

Abstract

This dissertation fits in the area of Marketing, more specifically in Social Media Marketing. Social media marketing is recently increasingly studied, since it has gained enormous notoriety, due to its great influence on consumers.

The purpose of this research is investigating the influence of Social Media on hotel unit quality perception by Generation Y customers. In parallel, it is also to intend to study more specifically the comparison between the influence of Online Site Reviews vs Instagram on costumes, as well as explore the different impact of Social Media on the perception of the individuals that already have their own income and the individuals that have the power to influence others but are not financially independent.

Two research methods were adopted, quantitative and qualitative. Throughout a questionnaire, that was applied to 373 individuals of Generation Y, it was possible to conclude that Social Media has an impact on the quality perception of these individuals. Online Site Reviews have a greater impact than Instagram, although consumers are also influenced by the content found in this communication channel. It was also possible to understand that inside of the generation understudy, that individuals who do not have financial autonomy change their quality perception easily.

Throughout an interview, that was applied to three Hotel establishments professionals, it can be then highlighted that in the hotel services provider's point of view the social media has a huge and visible impact on customers, being considered Instagram more relevant in the shaping of the quality perception.

Keywords: Social Media, communication channels, Hospitality Industry, Hotels and quality perception.

JEL Classification System: M31 Marketing

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

GEN – Generation

INE – Instituto Nacional de Estatística

SNS- Social networking site

UNWTO – World Tourism Organization

Introduction

The subject of this thesis is the influence of Social Media, Online Site Reviews and Instagram, on the clients' quality perception of a hotel considering a specific customer profile, the Generation Y. The relevance and interest of this subject arises due to the Digital Era that we live nowadays and its impact on a sector of activity that has been evolving over time. The choice to explore the Generation Y came from the fact that this is a generation that uses and gives a lot of importance to the online activities and is easily influenced by them. This generation was also chosen for its diversity, since it includes individuals who already have purchasing power, that will be called for the purpose of this study Generation Y1, and individuals that do not have this financial autonomy yet but have the power of influence others, called for the purpose of this investigation Generation Y2 in this dissertation.

The Hotel sector has increased its importance, due to the dynamic and constant innovation that characterizes it and to the increase importance of this sector nowadays on the sustainable countries economy. Accordingly, to Lahap *et al*. (2016), this industry contributes at least with 9% of the world GDP (Gross Domestic Product), which has a huge impact on the sustainable development of many countries. Considering the fact that this sector has been improving their position in the market with the evolution of the technology, remains necessary the investment by hotels units on the usage of the most common technological marketing tools in order to achieve better results, reach costumers interest in increase brand engagement faster. It is also considerable important to understand this relationship, because social media will impact the customers' opinion of the hotel sector, thus influencing their attitude through the hotel services.

Concerning the research problem of this work, it holds with the increasing influence that the social media exerts on the consumers of a specific service, since the creation of Web 2.0 and its emerging social media solutions have a role to be seen as a useful tool for user interaction (O'Reilly, 2007). According to Mangold and Faulds (2009), Social Media is one of the most important factors that should be taken in consideration, once it influence the costumer behaviour in different aspects, such as the awareness, opinions, attitudes, information acquisition, behaviour and post-purchase communication and evaluation. This fact makes it necessary to explore its influence on Generation Y in order to show to the companies in Hotel sector, that is mandatory to invest in the constant update of social media as a marketing communication tool and to pay more attention of the influence that is has on costumers, once it will impact their satisfaction, attitude and intentions towards the brand.

This dissertation has as main objective investigate the influence that Social Media has on the hotel unit quality perception of Generation Y costumers. Besides of this main objective, it also has some specific objectives that will help reaching the main one and therefore, will enrich the thesis content. The specific objectives are: Objective number 1 – Identify the role of social media has as an influencer on the Hotels' quality perception of the costumers, specifically the ones belonging to the Generation Y; Objective number 2 – Understand if there are a relevant influence of Social Media on the quality perception; Objective number 3 – Comprise in what way consumers change their attitude towards an hotel unit service quality, having in mind the information obtained throughout social media channels; Objective number 4 – Find out if it is Instagram or Online Site Reviews that have more influence on costumers that take part of the Generation Y; Objective number 5 – Understand which consumers, inside the Generation Y, are more influenced by social media; Objective number 6 – Investigate the opinion of the Hotel services providers about the impact that online site reviews and Instagram have on the quality perception of the Generation Y clients.

In this sense, the structure of this dissertation starts with the Literature Review chapter, based on papers and studies developed until this moment about the subject. This chapter will begin with a Hotel Industry characterization and evolution, then will be approach the Social Media concept and characterization, with a deeper analysis of Online Site Reviews and Instagram. To finish, the subject of the influence of Social media on Hotel sector, with a great focus on Generation Y.

After that, it will be present the Chapter of methodology, in which will be explore deeply the qualitative and quantitative approach, that will be applied in order to fulfil the objectives define bellow. In this chapter, the data collection approach and data analysis performed will be explained.

Furthermore, the Results Analysis Chapter will be present with the necessary analysis of the quantitative and qualitative approach.

In the subsequent Chapter the major findings of this research, as well as, the contributions to management and to research will be explained. To conclude, the Limitations and further research suggestions will be contained on the final Chapter.

Chapter 1
Literature Review

1.1. Hotel Sector

1.1.1. Concept

The Hotel sector is part of the Hospitality and Tourism Industry, which is composed by intangible products, which currently are growing significantly, in Portugal and worldwide. The Hospitality industry is "the very essence of tourism, involving the consumption of food, drink and accommodation in an environment away from the normal home base" (Page, 2009). According to Luck *et al.* (2003), Hospitality has a fundamental role in the domestic and inbound leisure market. The very nature of hospitality involves hosting and hospitality, provided by a host and involving a guest (Page, 2009). As mentioned before, the vast Tourism Industry contains the Hospitality sector, sector which is divided into two different sectors: the food and beverage sector and the accommodation sector. The accommodation sector refers to the Hotels, which will be the focus of this thesis.

One of the crucial activities for all Tourism Industry is the Hotel Sector, because Tourism didn't happen without Hotel establishments. According to Cunha (2001), accommodation is the base of any tourist's choice of destination. The service provided by this sector is the accommodation, the Hotel, which is a business that possesses their own products and methods and is defined as one commercial establishment produced with the goal of offering the tourist hosting, feed and other accessory services.

The Hotel sector is part of the tertiary services industry, that represents the sector that have the biggest impact on the countries' economy. The Hotel sector represents one of the most important sectors of activity due to their contribution for the countries' GDP and therefore for their economic viability. The importance of this sector lies mainly in its economic significance, accounting for at least 9% of the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). "This industry makes a significant contribution to the economic development of many countries, with some countries reliant on tourism as a catalyst for growth and development" (Lahap *et al*., 2016). It also has a tremendous impact on the employment rate, since it is known that this sector of activity contributes with 330 million jobs, 1 in 10 jobs worldwide (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2019). This impact occurs due to the huge workforce necessity that the sector requires, which makes possible the creation of a various number of workplaces. This industry also has the ability

of impacting other industries, due to their dimension and necessity to resort to other industries' services in order to fulfil their needs.

There are several reasons why touristic activity and consequently the Hotel Industry have been growing in a fast way, more steadily since 1980, being the main ones the increased interest for history, culture and art (Klumbis & Munters, 2004). According to Klumbis and Munters (2004), the rising number of retired active people in excellent conditions of health and the growing number of people with a high level of education, a huge interest in arts, history and culture are factors that have been contributing to the demand for the evolution of Hospitality services.

The growing importance of this industry in the Portuguese market is related with the fact that, Portugal, has been increasingly recognized as a potential tourism destination and its value has been recognized, not only regarding the popularity of the industry but also due to the good practices that are used in this sector of activity. These days, hospitality has started to be seen as a commercialized experience, where there exists a guest that pays for a service that they consume via a bill (Page, 2009). Nowadays, this activity is perceived as an economic and strategic activity, but this concept has changed a lot throughout the years. At the birth of Hotel sector, it was not perceived as a commercial activity, instead it has been seen as a reciprocity as people hosted and were hosted.

The Hotel sector, as said before, represents a sector of great importance on the Portuguese market. In these days, Portugal is well seen as a touristic option and thus takes part on some rankings. According to the World Economic Forum – Travel & Tourism competitiveness index, Portugal occupy a place in the top fifteen of the most competitive touristic destinations in the World. Apart to that classification, Portugal also appear in a good place in several rankings in the hospitality area, such as in the International Tourism Receipts worldwide ranking (2015) in where Portugal occupies the 26th place. Although Portugal has great notoriety in this sector of activity, it is important to note that it was not always equal.

It will be present bellow a table with important statistics provided by the Instituto Nacional de Estatística (INE). This data was collected with the goal of illustrate numerically the actual position of the Hotel Industry in the Portuguese Market and characterize it. It is possible to notice the huge impact that this industry represents for the economic activity of the country.

Hotels	Year of 2018
Number of guests	24.9 million guests
Overnight stays spent in tourism accommodation establishments	66.7 million overnight stays spent
External Market	England maintain as the principal external market
Number of establishments	6360, being 48,2% local accommodation
Accommodation capacity (bed places)	414 339, being 319 740 related to hotels, 70 509 to local accommodation and 24 090 to rural tourism and lodging tourism
Average stay (No.) in tourism accommodation establishments	2,7 nights
Revenue from accommodation	2953 million euro
Motivation of the trips made by residents	The majority 10,3 million do their trips for leisure, recreational or holiday motives

Table 1.1: Hotel Industry activity in the Portuguese Market

Source: Own elaboration based on INE

1.1.2. General Characterization

According to the Decreto-Lei nº 39/2008 of the 7th of May, the touristic establishments can be divided into different types, such as Hotel establishments, Tourist resorts, Tourist apartments, Tourist resorts, Residential tourism enterprises, Rural tourism enterprises and camping. Hotel establishments are the tourist accommodation intended to provide temporary accommodation and other accessory support services, with or without the provision of meals, and geared to a daily rental. This type of accommodation can be classified into three different groups: Hotels, aparthotels and inns. The ones that this thesis will focus on regard the hotel establishments, more specifically Hotels.

In order to install this type of accommodation, it is know that the Hotel must have whole of one or more buildings, which constitute a harmonious and articulated whole, inserted in a set of contiguous spaces, showing architectural expression and coherent functional characteristics.

According to the World Tourism Organization, a Hotel is a commercial establishment with the objective of giving travellers host, food and other accessory services. The INE also defined a hotel as an "(…) establishment that occupies a building or only part of it independently, constituting its installations a homogeneous whole, with complete and contiguous floors, own and direct access for the exclusive use of its users, to whom temporary accommodation and

other services are provided ancillary or support services, with or without provision of meals, against payment". These establishments have at least 10 accommodation units. A Hotel can be translated as well like "an establishment that offers a set of goods and services to satisfy the needs of its customers" (Mata, 2003). Quintas (2006), defines a hotel as an establishment whose main objective is to provide, against payment, temporary accommodation to the public, also guaranteed, as a rule, other services such as food, drinks, entertainment, laundry, in an organized and integrated manner.

These commercial establishments provide different types of services and are organized in a specific way. It is known that a service is any act or performance that one party may offer to another and that is essentially intangible and does not result in the ownership of anything, being its production linked, or not, to a physical good (Kotler & Amstrong, 1999). In order to provide services in a professional manner, Costa (2012) argues that "hotel companies should always try to: understand the needs of clients; study the most appropriate solutions; apply such solutions in the most appropriate sense".

In order to provide quality services to their customers, hotels need to properly plan and organize their internal structure. The organizational structure of a hotel comprises a number of functions, all of which have distinct purposes. However, only together will these functions be able to satisfy the needs of customers (Quintas, 2006). Hotels are divided in different departments, in order for them to function properly. The number of departments and their size depends on the size of the hotel establishment, its' necessities and the number of guests it wants to host.

According to Quintas (2006) hotels are divided in two different departments: *Front of the Office* and *Back of the Office*, in order to have a sustainable performance. *The Front of the Office* relates to the functions that works directly with the client. In other hand, the *Back of the Office* relates to the areas that provide assistance to the clients in an indirect way. These functions individually are not capable to function and need to work together in order to satisfy the needs of the clients. Inside of the organizational structure of a hotel it is possible to find different departments, such as the administration of the hotel, the direction of the Hotel, the Marketing and Commercial departments, the Human Resources department, the Maintenance department, the Safety department, the Production department and the animation department (Quintas, 2006). Besides these departments, some hotels offer other services such as commercial spaces, leisure and sports facilities, disco, hairdresser and garage.

The amount of specialization in the services offered by a specific hotel plays a very important role in this industry, since it is essential to define the desired market segment and

define the services and strategies according to it. In line with this, inside of the huge offers present in the Hotel sector, there are different types of hotels. This characterization of the different type of hotels is made depending on the hotel dimensions, their location, the target markets of it, levels of service, ownerships and affiliations. Regarding the size of the hotel, hotels can be characterized into very small size hotels, small hotels, medium and large according to the number of rooms offered by them. Then, these establishments can also be characterized in consideration of their location being the most know the airport hotels, the city hotels, motels and resorts. Once some hotels want to specialize their services, there are a range of hotel that define their type according to the market segment that they want to attract, such as the airport hotels, business hotels, casino hotels, resorts and self-catering hotels. Hotels have different types, when comparing them based on their level of services, being those luxury hotels, mid-range services and economic hotels. Finally, ownership and affiliation represent another way to classify hotels, in two types like independent hotels and chain hotels.

Otherwise, a different way to differentiate hotels is by using hotel classification systems. These classification systems were created due to the necessity of clarifying, at the time of the appearance of the first hotel, which hotels had the minimum requirements for a good state and which ones didn't have. "This system was created to be meaningful both for the costumer and for the hotel business and to contribute to transparency and safety of hotel offers in a way that would help customers to determine what sort of conditions they can expect for the price they are paying" (Cser & Ohuchi, 2008). This classification can also be seen as a way for evaluating an establishment's position in the market, sort of like a promotion and marketing.

It must be clear that the hotel's classification is not the reflex of its quality (Holloway, 1994). The concepts of classification and grading tend to be confused by travellers. This misconception will require the latter clarification of these two systems. According to Holloway (1994), "classification distinguishes hotels according to certain physical features whereas grading identifies hotels based on certain verifiable objective features of the service offered". These systems have all the same purpose and can be characterized "according to technical parameters based on what the hotel offers and not based on the quality of the services" (Cser & Ohuchi, 2008).

With this sector's evolution, each hotel began to choose their own classification system. There have been attempts by the world tourism organisation to try to get countries to reach an agreement on a common classification system to no avail. Currently, about seventy different systems exist around the world. The first system of classification was developed by Europe (Hotrec, 2004). According to Cser and Ohuchi (2008) several countries, such as Finland and

Norway, don't have a classification system and as an alternative they introduce a grading scheme. It is not yet compulsory worldwide but in Europe there is an obligation to have a classification system, being that "the start system is the most common symbol for grading, except for the UK and Cyprus, where diamonds and letters are used in combination with stars, respectively" (Cser & Ohuchi, 2008). According to Cser and Ohuchi (2008) the reality of Europe is not reflected worldwide, where exist several classification systems being used.

This subject has been widely studied and some predictions about it was made and, according to Hensens (2015), conventional classification systems will, in the future, be forced to integrate social media and to integrate customer opinion in this process, in order to continue justifying their existence. This change in the way these systems are managed "(…) will lead to an innovation revolution, whereby hotels seek to respond quicker to consumer trends as they have a direct feedback loop to their position in the market" (Hensens, 2015).

1.1.3. Evolution of the Sector

Hospitality is one of the oldest human activities (Oliveira, 2001). According to Lashley (2008), social sciences such as Anthropology, human geography, social history and sociology help to understand the hospitality as a human activity. The concept of hotel was born in the nineteen century and has their origin in the private domain.

Hospitality follows the trend of the tourism, once it is the tourism activity that guides the need for hospitality in the market. Tourism is defined by the UNWTO as "a social, cultural and economic phenomenon, which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/ professional proposes". This economic activity has different roles for different people, for some of them is a kind of fun and relaxation and, for others, tourism represents a source of employment.

This activity as their beginning in the most ancient times, with the evolution of the people and their interests. As mentioned above, the hotel sector works with a commercial objective, since there were several events that shaped this sector until it presented the development it has these days. Since the early centuries, the desire that people had to know the unknown and to overcome barriers motivated the beginning of the touristic movement around the world. Seafarings, religious peregrinations, the merchants who circulated throughout the kingdoms in the ancient ages already reflected an experience similar to the cult of hospitality. The discoveries and the enormous desire to discover the unknown, led to the increase in the number of seafarings and the emergence of the first accommodations for people who pursued this dream for expansion. Also, the great devotion to Christianity and its respective expansion is closely

linked to the development of hospitality, since nations used to take several pilgrimages to Jerusalem and made other pilgrimages. According to Badaró (2005) the touristic activity started to be seen as an economic service in the ancient Greece with the Olympic Games, where a huge part of the population travelled to Olimpia in order to be present in this relevant sportive event.

The expansion of the Roman Empire throughout Europe, the expansion of their culture, increased commercial interchange and the numerous reasons to travel motivated the first leisure trips. This development of the touristic activity had a decline with the fall of the Roman Empire and with their decrease in trading activity. This event made it so that the time for leisure travels decreased, and so, tourism started to gain characteristics more related to adventure and faith (Belchior & Poyares, 1987). Religious trips started to occur with more frequency and gain more relevance, with the expansion of the Christianism. This occurred due to the fact that pilgrims used to stay overnight in the monasteries, where all have in common the fact that they merely search for a place to stay the night. It is not possible to depreciate the importance of the Marco Polo journeys and the Maritimes discoveries that boosted the touristic activity, since they increased the number of maritime trips, thus increasing the number of accommodations in ports for sailors.

With the passing of years, the transportation conditions improved and more ways to move from one place to another appeared. Along with the normal evolution of the nations and their cultures and with the age of opulence, the ancient accommodations gave rise to the first Hotels. The Industrial Revolution gave rise to the first motors and consequently, in the 19th century, the train was born. With this transport development, the hotel industry started to evolve and in the 4th decade the first travel agencies were born. At the end of the century, the first car was created and in 1908, Henry Ford became famous for their massive production. This was followed by the creation of the airplane which meant the creation of the biggest facility there is to travel to different and until this moment unknown places. As expected, some years later the first air companies were born, which allowed people to go wherever they wanted and make travel a more agile activity.

With the beginning of the new century and with the natural evolution of things, it became easier for people to move around. The first hotel schools were also created during this period. With people's increasing familiarity with the concept and with the large amount of knowledge available in the area, resorts emerged, and hotels started betting on innovating and improving their characteristics.

Tourism sector of activity has been changing and evolving throughout the historic events that has occurred in the world over the centuries. Tourism in Portugal, which represents

nowadays a strategic and crucial sector of activity, has suffered some delay in its development, unlike other countries. The delay in the beginning of the development of this sector of activity in Portugal was mainly due to the isolationist policy that occurred during the "Estado Novo" and the lack of infrastructure that would prevent the growth of this activity in Portugal (Milheiro & Santos, 2005). According to Milheiro and Santos (2005) the XX century represents a great mark for the beginning of the notoriety of the Tourism in Portugal, once it starts to expand and to be seen as a powerful economic activity.

The figure below shows the evolution in the entry of tourists to Portugal between 1967 and 2007, in which is reflected the beginning of the Touristic activity in Portugal. It is possible to understand that this growth and relevance of Portugal as a potential tourist destination increase in the beginning of the decade from the 60's XX. This sector is experiencing an exponential growth, due to the increasing number of tourists choosing this destiny, but there are some ups and downs in this indicator. It is important to observe in the figure below that there is a decrease between the years 1991 and 1993 and also in the beginning of the 21st century. According to Cunha (1997), this decrease in the number of tourists observed between 1991 and 1993, may have as main reason the growth in the number of competitors in the sector offering a product similar to tourists, being it sun, sea and sand. With regard to the decline in the number of tourists at the beginning of the 21st century, it is thought that it may have something to do with the terroristic attacks that took place on September 11 in New York and also with the introduction of the euro as currency.
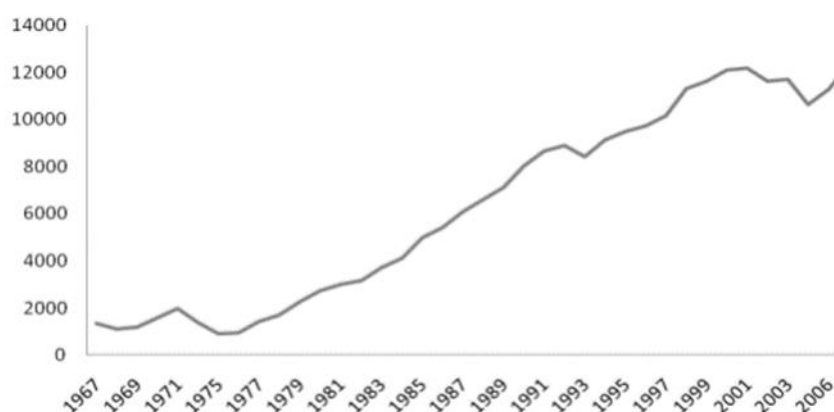
Figure 1.1: Entrance of tourists in Portugal

Source: Instituto Nacional de Estatística (INE), Estatísticas do Turismo

In the 21st century, the hotel sector continues to grow in Portugal, with Portugal being increasingly seen as a destination of choice for tourists and a effort was made by the sector to

improve their service making them more competitive. As can be seen from the chart shown below, according to Tourism statistics for 2018 worldwide terms, tourist arrivals international markets continued to increase year per year, although growth rate vary year per year.
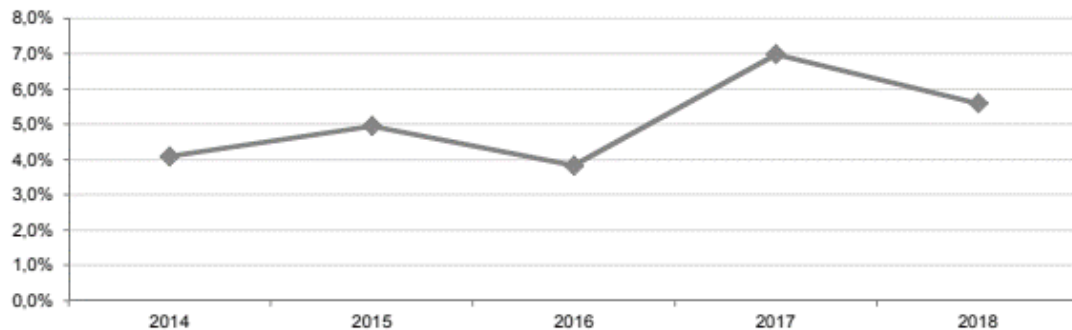
Figure 1.2: Annual rate of annual change in international tourist arrivals
Source: UNWTO – Barómetro do Turismo Mundial

In general, the fact that tourism began to be widely spread concept, the development of a culture of hospitality, the evolution of the means of transport and the growing desire to explore the unknown, the touristic activity and consequently the hotel activity has been boosted. It is then possible to state that, what in the past was a need of people who for personal reasons had to resort to travel is now taken for granted.

1.2. Social Media

1.2.1. Web 2.0

The Web is constantly evolving and has become over time a very relevant and indispensable tool for people's daily lives. According to Qualman (2009), the new technologies allow communication worldwide, but with the excess of information that exists in the Web, the creation of facilitating mechanisms become necessary and it is in this context that internet have an important update on the beginning of the decade of 2000 given rise to what is called Web 2.0.

According to O'Reilly (2007), Web 2.0 can be defined as "sites and services that rely upon the generation of content by their users, as opposed to editors or dedicated content creators". This concept can also be defined as a service that "(…) invite users to a direct and strong participation and derive profitable returns from the several forms of advertising present online" (Miguéns *et al*., 2008). Web 2.0 presents several characteristics according to O'Reilly (2007)

that are the "(…) radical decentralization, radical trust, participation instead of publishing, users contributors, rich user experience, the long tail, the web as platform, control of one's own data, remixing data, collective intelligence, attitudes, better software by more users, play, undetermined user behaviour".

Further, it is possible to understand through the definitions of the concept presented above, that this technological advance has led people to become an active agent in the production and dissemination of online content. According to Castells (2004) the web users have gone from consumers of content to authors and disseminators of it. In line with it, the websites is "(…) no longer just a static page, but a dynamic platform which allows users the autonomous generation of content and the possibility of telling their own exp1eriences" (Miguéns *et al*., 2008). The Web was changed, once what before was perceived as a business-to-consumer marketing is now seen as a peer-to-peer model for the sharing of information (Miguéns *et al*., 2008). According to Miguéns *et al*. (2008) the Web 2.0 is characterized "(…) by an unprecedented easiness of interactivity which fosters the formation of communities and the generation of user-driven content". The rich wealth of user generated contents is one of the relevant features of web 2.0. According to Sigala (2007) the Web 2.0 "(…) do nothing more than realising and exploiting the full potential of the genuine concept and role of the Internet".

The creation of the Web 2.0 and its posterior evolution leads to a new type of consumers that can "(…) easily access inormation and easily share own views, comments and suggestions in an informal and collaborative way, increasing the value and influence power as determinants of choice for other consumers" (Miguéns *et al*., 2008).

Among the several topics that are most popular in this environment appear the travel and tourism, since it represents subjects that are ever growing discuss and once represents one of the sectors of activity with a huge relation with the new technologies. According with the concept of Web 2.0, the concept of Travel 2.0 arises. It is known that first was created the Travel 1.0 in the early days and then the Travel 2.0. The Travel 1.0 allows to "(…) booking basics moved online, enhancing the online travel experience" (Conrady & Buck, 2007). According to Xian and Gretzel (2010), Travel 2.0 is the "latest innovative technologies like blogs, web forums, podcasting and online videos (vlogs), customer ratings, and evaluation systems". To Conrady and Buck (2007) the Travel 2.0 "(…) made technology for travel distribution faster and cheaper".

Some authors argue which innovative technologies are the most use in the hotel and travel industry and according to Pudliner (2007) the forums and blogs are the most used in this area, where informational content about travel and tourism products and services will be present in

order to allow the potential consumers to make a more factual and readily choice. According to Elci *et al*. (2017), the Travel 2.0 websites were constructed and design in a particular way, once this websites are prepared to include interactive structure between the ones that provide the service and the ones who intend to buy the service. The Travel 2.0 have several advantages, being the most important that this technology "(...) enables Internet users to become the co-producers, the co-designers, the co-marketers and the co-distributors of tourism experiences and services as well the co-entrepreneurs of new e-business model" (Sigala, 2007). So, this new possibility of interacting in the travel and hotel sector, allows the service providers and travellers sharing their own content.

Although it is known that Web 2.0 has several advantages for our lives and have been facilitating it, some authors reflected about it and develop some evaluations of Web 2.0. According to Fuchs (2014), the main critiques are that " (…) Web 2.0 is based on the exploitation of free labour; Web 2.0 are contradictory and therefore also serves dominative interests; Web 2.0 is marketing ideology; The internet economy is dominated by corporate media chains and Web 2.0 are more passive users than active creators".

1.2.2. Characterization

Social Media has been growing in the last decade due to the advent of Web 2.0 and has become a very useful and popular way to communicate, being considered as the "main channel for costumers experience and interaction with the word" (Hofacker & Belanche, 2016). According to Law (2006), in line with Web 2.0, Social Media led to significant transformations in Business-to-Business (B2B), Business-to Consumer (B2C) and Consumer-to-Consumer (C2C).

Social Media is "revolutionizing the way we communicate, collaborate, share and consume" (Aral *et al*., 2013). This communicate on channel allows people to communicate with a huge variety of people around the world (Hofacker & Belanche, 2016). This channel has "(…) changed the way people around d the globe communicates with one another" (Seth, 2012). It is possible to highlight the power of this communication channel in the way of exchange feedback of products and services. This channel allows faster communication and contact, making it possible to detect instantly dissatisfaction and enthusiasm about a specific brand.

This communication channel has been described by several authors throughout the years. Social media "describes a variety of new sources of online information that are created, initiated, circulated and used by consumers intent on educating each other about products, brands, services, personalities and issues" (Blackshaw & Nazarro, 2004). This concept is also defined by a range of Internet-based applications created on the technological foundation of

Web 2.0, allowing the creation and exchange of User Generated-Content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). This communication channel can also be defined as the "set of online tools that supports social interaction between users, facilitating the creation and sharing of knowledge, and transforming monologue (company to customer) into dialog" (Hansen *et al*., 2010). Social Media is a comprehensive concept that includes a huge range of online word-of-mouth, such as blogs, service ratings websites, websites, online reviews, forums, internet discussion boards, moblogs, cyber communities, social networks, photo-sharing sites, video-sharing sites.

Social Media can be classified into different types: the horizontal social media, the vertical social media, Blogging, Wikis and Multimedia. According to Brandão (2011), the horizontal social media are the ones that connects people, consisting of a network where you have friends who share likes and opinions on different subjects. Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram are examples of this kind of social media. On the other hand, vertical social media are those that focus on the market and users connect in order to exchange opinions on issues of common interest (Brandão, 2011). Examples of this type of social media are TripAdvisor and VirtualTourism.

This form of communication has a great impact on costumers, due to their power of influencing customers in their decision making and capacity of impacting the customer trust and perception toward a specific brand. Regardless of these positive characteristics of Social Media, this channel of communication became the "major factor in influencing the various aspects of consumer behaviour including awareness, information acquisition, opinions, attitudes, purchase behaviour and post-purchase communication and evaluation" (Mangold & Faulds, 2009).

Although this channel represents a great opportunity for companies to promote their products and communicate with their customers in a more intuitive way, it is also seen as a threat for companies (Hofacker & Belanche, 2016). This occurs due to the lack of control that companies and managers have on the user-generated-content shared on the social media. This content can be negative to some companies, since they don't have the capacity to control it and it can influence other consumers. In order to try to avoid this possible negative outcome of social media, companies should "be active, interesting, humble, unprofessional and honest in their social media activity" (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

It is also known that people spend a huge number of hours in the Internet and Portuguese consumers are not an exception. The Portuguese people used their Social Media applications at least once a day and have their favourite Social Media. According to Marktest (2019), Instagram, Messenger, YouTube and Facebook are the most used social media applications in

Portugal. This research also indicates that in the Portuguese population 55% considered themselves fans of social media pages.

According to Statista (2018) "Social Media usage is one of the most popular online activities". The number of people that use social media is increasing worldwide over the years. As can be seen in Figure 1.3, presented below, there was an exponential evolution in the number of users. In the year of 2010 there were 0.97 billion users and it is expected that in 2021, 3.09 billion people use Social Media.
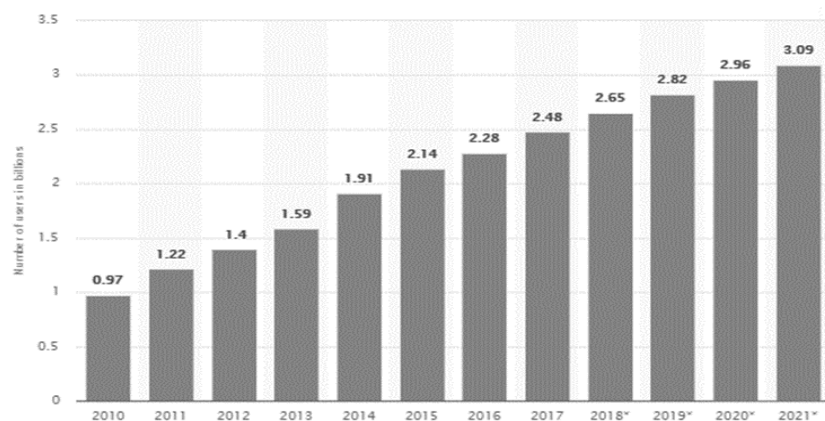
Figure 1.3: Number of social networks users worldwide from 2010 to 2021 (in billions)
Source: Statista

This channel of communication represents nowadays one of the major trends, having aroused with its increased important, scientific interest for the Hospitality and Tourism. Miguéns *et al*. (2008), confirm that this sectors of activity are known for having a straight relationship with technologies of information and communication, thus reflecting their huge investigation interest for this sector of activity.

1.2.3. Online Review Sites

Product related information from consumers can be obtain throughout Internet and social media is not an exception. Since Social Media has a huge impact on customers' purchase decisions, they give huge importance to the online reviews' nowadays. Online Reviews are fast, up-to-date, and available everywhere, thus convert in the electronic Word-of-Mouth (e-WOM) of the technological age (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Customers resort to these sites due to the need of feeling assurance regarding the purchase that they are making. The most used online review websites in the world is TripAdvisor, since it is the "world's largest travel website" (Sotiriadis

& Zyl, 2013). Due to the increase acceptance of e-WOM, a growing number of businesses began to invest in e-WOM services.

Online Reviews are contained in the sites and can be defined as "(…) peer generated product evaluations posted on company or third-party websites" (Mudambi & Schuff, 2010). According to Li *et al.* (2013), the Online Reviews have the ability of give information about the products, the quality, value for money and the overall evaluation. Besides that, Online reviews "(…) provide useful information about customers' satisfaction" (Castro & Ferreira, 2018). In the other hand, the Online Review Site can be defined as "(…) a website, section of a website or a software tool containing consumer reviews. Reviews published on such sites concern a range of goods, services or business and their predominant audience are consumers seeking to inform themselves about a prospective purchase" (Valant, 2015). According to Chen and Xie (2008), it is also important to add that online reviews are responsible to generate strong e-WOM and can be situated in different ways. These sites can have two different types: the sites with open system and the sites with the closed system. According to Valant (2015), the open system sites consist in review sites that any customer can use and post a review without permission, while the sites with the closed system are the ones where a customer is able to submit a review need to be a confirmed buyer.

According to Lee *et al.* (2008) online reviews "(…) acting as an informant and recommender" and also are capable of acting as an influencer in the decision-making process. The informative role of online reviews relates to the ability to provide the information to customers like the one provided by the sellers. In the other hand, this communication channel has the ability to act as a recommender, once they make endorsements about a product or a seller.

Increasingly with the evolution of technology each time more services can be reviewed and evaluate online. These review sites, that been gaining relevance are used by customer with the goal of feeling more confident regarding their options, offering them a reliable source of information that help them to recognize dishonest sellers and avoid untrustworthy products or services (Valant, 2015). Valant (2015) affirm that "(…) consumer online reviews can be qualified as a power shift tool, enabling consumers to pull information, rather than having businesses push information to them", which lead to the feeling of empowerment from the costumers.

As everything online reviews have advantages and disadvantages. Valant (2015) listed some of the main advantages of this communication channel, which are: "enabling consumers to make faster and better buying decisions; ensuring competition among business regarding

products and services that consumers value and therefore indirectly help bring up their quality; allowing consumers to narrow their search and identity reviews of particular relevance to them and bringing consumers' attention to a wider range of products and services that they might otherwise not have been aware of ". On the other hand, this also has some disadvantages, being the most famous, the lack of credibility that the information available online can have due to the lack of knowledge about how people obtain and interpret the information available.

1.2.3.1. Hotel Review Sites

The Review sites are useful tools in a huge range of industries and Hotel Sector is not an exception. This Hotel Review sites have the propose of promoting the interaction between the elements of the tourism industry, encouraging them to share their experiences. (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014). So, costumers tend to resource a lot of time to this site and them "(…) adopt a more proactive communication posture, valuing peers' opinions sometimes more than firms' promotions, which reflects a shift in the locus of power" (Amaral *et al*., 2014). As said before, the Hotel Review sites are very important nowadays to customers and it is necessary to clarify which are the existing hotel review sites and which are the most reputable and the ones travellers used more. According to Forbes (2018), there are a list of hotel review sites considered the best and the "most trusted" ones. In this ranking are included TripAdvisor, Google, Trivago, Booking.com, Facebook and Oyster, from the best ranked to the worst, respectively.

TripAdvisor is "(…) one of the most popular websites for travel accommodations, was founded in early 2000 and its headquartered in the U.S." (Law, 2006). This website is a travel information website in which the content is provided mostly by their users (Grindlinger, 2012). This review site provides "(…) advice from millions of tourists and a wide variety of travel choices and planning features" (Sotiriadis & Zyl, 2013). The main objective of this website is providing "unbiased" user generated content and recommendations about travel destinations and accommodations (Vásquez, 2011). According to Forbes (2018), TripAdvisor have 661 million reviews that cover about 7.7 million accommodations, airlines, experiences and restaurants.

Google "(…) has become the dominant search engine in the world. Google´s search is based on a single box as user interface, which makes a search intuitive and easy for most users" (Fuchs, 2014). Google known as a huge search engine, has recently begun to incorporate "(…) its Hotel Finder into search, allowing users to retrieve a list of hotels with prices, photos, reviews and street review panoramas" (Forbes, 2018).

Trivago is a German site owned by the Expedia Group and can be defined as a metasearch site that refers users directly to a third party. Forbes (2018) describes that "Trivago publishes a rating index based on reviews from sites like Expedia and Hotels.com". This hotel review site allows users to compare the different prices of the hotels and find out the cheapest options. Trivago contains more than 175 million evaluations and 19 million images of hotels spread worldwide.

Booking.com can be seen as a hotel-booking site that allows reviews done by costumers. This hotel review site affirms that "(…) publishes verified reviews from real people because leaving a review on this site is only possible if an individual books an accommodation through the site and actually stays at the reviewed property" (Fuentes *et al.*, 2018). Forbes (2018) affirms that their strength is its methodology and present 161 million reviews from verified guests.

Facebook is "(…) the most popular social networking site (SNS)", that also have hotels reviews on it (Fuchs, 2014). According to Forbes (2018), although users "(…) might not immediately know if the author of a review stayed at a hotel, it's not hard to find out". This happens due to the real name policy that Facebook have, which attributes veracity to it.

Oyster is known to have one of the strongest methodologies of the hotel review sites (Forbes, 2018). This hotel review site presents "(…) a team of professional investigators who investigate hotels and then publish comprehensive high-resolution photos and expert reviews" (Forbes, 2018). This Website has three main proposes: the travel expertise, the unbiased reviews and in-depth. The first one concern everything users want to know about where to go, stay and what to do. The unbiased review means that users can count with honest reviews and undoctor photos. Finally, it has the in-dept objective, once their users can find everything, they need to plan a perfect vacation.

1.2.4. Instagram

According to Frommer (2010) Instagram is "an online, mobile photo-sharing, video-sharing, and social network service that enables its users to take pictures and videos, and then share them on other platforms". It is important to add that Instagram is a free app (Wood, 2015) and was exclusively created for mobile usage. This social network site was created with the purpose of being a site where people can share photographs and videos using a specific hashtag. This hashtag allows user to find photographs (Sheldon & Bryant, 2015). According to Neher (2013), these applications also allows the users to edit the photos and consequently creates beautiful content. Besides this function, according to Rohrs (2014), Instagram has nine different roles such as: taking a photos or videos; change the way media look by choosing different filters; the

possibility of add a description; the possibility of add a hashtag; tag people in the photos or videos; identify the place where the photos and videos was taken; search for other people´s photos and videos; like, comment, or share other people's photos and videos and the possibility of share their content on other social media network.

Considering the way users connect with each other, it is possible to state that Instagram is considered to be an asymmetric social network. This means that the number of people that one user follows is not necessarily equal to the number of people following it (Hu *et al*., 2014). Another advantageous feature that this social media present is that at this time when privacy in the digital space is becoming an issue to be taken into consideration, Instagram give the possibility of choosing between a public and a private profile. The difference between them is that, in a public profile, any user can follow and access the content published in it, but only authorized users can follow and access the content of a private profile (Hu *et al.,* 2014).

In order to cover the history of this social network, Instagram was launched in October 06 of 2010 by two enterprises called Mike Krieger and Kevin Systrom and "(…) has quickly emerged as a new medium in spotlight in the recent years" (Hu *et al*., 2014). In December 2011, the Instagram App was considered the 2011 App Store iPhone App of the year and in April 2012 Instagram star to be available for Android. In the course of the 2012 year, in July the Instagram community achieves 80 million users and in December, this social network starts to be available in 25 different languages. In the year ahead in June, the video was introduced on Instagram and in December began to be available the Instagram Direct. In June 2014, new creative tools were introduced on Instagram and the discovery of caption editing on Instagram occurred on November. Already in September 2015, Instagram celebrate a community of 400 million users and in October, the possibility of boomerang was introduced. In the following year was made, in May, a refresh of the Instagram looks and in August was introduced the Instagram stories. In December 2016, the community of Instagram users achieve the 600 million. In April 2017, was introduced the new Instagram direct and in April 700 million people was using this social media. Already in June of 2017 was created the archive on profile and, in August, Instagram stories was brought to the Mobile Web. This year was also marked by the introduction of a huge number of new stickers. On the year of 2018, in January was introduced the GIF Stickers and, in June, Instagram welcome to IGTV and the possibility to add music in stories was introduced. In November more ways to shop on Instagram was introduced. The evolution of Instagram continues and on March of 2019 checkout was introduced on Instagram and, in October, threads was included in Instagram.

Instagram is one of the most used social media in Portugal and worldwide. According to Instagram statistics, more than one billion users are active per month and more than 500 million stories actives are post daily. This social network site is considered the fastest growing social network site worldwide (Wagner, 2015). According to Marktest (2019), the Instagram is the social media network that grew more for follow enterprises and brands on social media, multiplying for nineteen the values obtain in 2013. This fact shows that people don't resort to this social media only for personal use but also for commercial purposes. The success of Instagram can be explained by the fact that "(…) photos and videos have become the key social currencies online" (Rainie *et al.*, 2012).

According to Klie (2015), this channel of communication has a big consumer audience, which makes it a good option for companies. A research made in 2014 by Forrester in order to compare the level of engagement of brands in different social media channels, in which they came to the conclusion that Instagram is one of the social media communication channels that delivers a higher level of engagement, delivered 58 more engagement for brands per follower compare to one of the biggest competitors, the Facebook.

According to Sheldon and Bryant (2015) since "(…) internet users spend more time on Instagram than other sites, it is important for organizations to understand why consumers use Instagram and what gratifications they receive from it". Instagram start to be seen as a powerful marketing tool, due to the big notoriety that it has nowadays. According to Pereira (2015), Instagram can be a powerful tool for brands, since it allows to increase their notoriety, increase their number of positive associations, send personalized messages to each client – through Instagram's direct messages option – and also give brands the possibility to change or reinforce the client's perceptions about the brand and its image. Instagram has been frequently used as a marketing communication channel, once this social network allow the brands to increase their visibility, make possible to improve the good image that clients could have on a specific brand and it is a good channel to spread the word about brands and attract more potential customers.

This channel is also really used in the Hotel Industry, due to the several characteristics that give really advantages to the brands that choose this social network as one of their main digital communication channels. This is also very useful for hotels, once Instagram is an online photo-album where tourists can share their experiences with others and be themselves an advertising channel. According to Hanan and Putit (2013), Instagram "(…) create the good and bad impression based on the personal experience towards the tourist destinations". It occurs once the photography is posted in a social media it will automatically produce an impression. The

good and positive image published about a destination and a hotel increase the probability it being chosen by other clients.

In this social media, a phenomenon called Influencer started to emerge. In this Digital Era, the Influencers have a big impact on people's opinions. Influencers are people that are chose for being identified as influential users and challenge them to endorse a specific brand or product. Brands will partner with this influential user with the goal of promoting their products in her/his social media accounts. In order to choose the influencers that a brand want to work with, it is important to take into consideration the number of followers, once a higher number of followers will allow brands to reach a higher number of potential clients. (Veirman *et al*., 2017). So, this is also a good opportunity for hotels to explore this alternative. Instagram is also very useful and successful for this sector of activity, since each hotel establishments can have their one page on Instagram and use different types of advertisement to promote their products. It is also a good idea for the hotels to use hashtags in their publications, once it will reach more social media consumers more easily.

1.3. The impact of Social Media on the Hotel Sector

1.3.1. Characterization of the different generations

Society is composed by different kind of people, with different ages and different interests. There are several authors interested in this topic and to Derecskei *et al.* (2017) a generation is a "(…) specific type of population cohort: it means a group of people who were born in the same year. As the members of a generation should live through demographically important events interlocked this way and frequency of occurrence of these events are comparable with factors affecting in time". Also, Borges *et al.* (2006) defined this concept as "(…) a peer group defined by both its demographics and its key life events like passage from birth to adulthood". The generations have as common characteristics that each one is unique and can be describe by their diverse collective features and moulded by the social context around them (Cecily, 2019).

It is relevant to understand the major characteristic of each generation, once companies have as one of the big challenges adapt to the evolving requirements of the consumers (Sima, 2016). There are five generations: the Baby Boomers, the generation X, the generation Y, the generation Z and the generation α. The Baby boomers also known as olders are the ones born after the Second World War with a estimated birth date comprised between 1943 and 1960. The generation X also known as middle-age are the ones born between 1961 and 1980. After that, exist the generation Y also known as millennial or Net generation have their estimated birth

date comprised between 1981 and 2000. The generation Z born between 2001 and 2010 and lastly the generation α born in the year 2010 onwards. For the purpose of this thesis only the baby boomer's generation, generation X and Y will be considered, once they are part of the range of consumers of Hotels, with highlight to the generation Y that are the one understudy.

Firstly, the Baby boomers are "(…) high loyal repeat consumers, having considerable available income and time due to being retired or being close to retirement" (Sima, 2016). According to Jaume (2015), this generation are curious and want to gain knowledge about the latest gadgets. They are also well known for being very sociable and to prefer face-to-face contact and likes to feel safe and secure about their action and buying decisions (Sima, 2016).

Regarding their attitude towards the hotel industry and consequently the attitude of the hotel industry regarding this clients, it is known that the hotel chain perceives this generation as their main market (McMahon, 2005), once they are perceived by the ideal chain hotels costumers. It occurs once this generation are the ones that have more time available and it is known that the previous generations didn't travel to much but this one are more active and enthusiastic about the travel activity (Sima, 2016). Hotels need to have in consideration that these people give importance to the personalized information and always prefer the physical staff instead of some digital option. For example, this people prefer booking with a human voice instead of the phone, but they are curious people, so they don't mind to booking online if no other option is provided. This generation are well known by being influenced by the youngest generation, in especial the generation X, and this topic is not an exception.

Secondly, the generation X is a generation that "(…) arrives at a specific environment" (Derecskei *et al.*, 2017). This group of individuals can be described as "(…) the best educated and the first technologically savvy generation in history. They are most tolerant and value individuality" (Sima, 2016). Generation X are realistic people that have real expectations about the thing and are very family-oriented people (Fitzpatrik, 2005). This generation was the one leading with technology and, due to this fact, they are dependent to it in diverse aspects of their lives which are aligned with their preference to seek comfort.

This generation is considered as the main market for chain hotels and that is the reason why the hotel sector tries to change some issues in order to became coherent to their habits (Sima, 2016). This group of people gives importance to their individualism, due to that they always looking for hotels that acknowledge their individualism. "They are beginning to react to the numbing sameness of brands and are increasingly looking for accommodations that are an extension of their lifestyle – places with more personality and unique tones" (McMahon, 2005). According to Sima (2016), with regard to their levels of loyalty as consumers, it is possible to

say that they are not as loyal as the generations before them, but they are loyal when they realize that their needs are met.

Lastly, appear the generation Y also famous as Millennials and Net generation. Millennials are the ones that born in a technological world. This generation is not a homogeneous group, due to the different characteristics and attitudes among its individuals. There are two main groups, the Generation Y1 and the Generation Y2. The first group is essentially composed by individuals who were born in the 80s, while the second group is composed mainly of individuals who were born in the 90s. This way of looking at this generation as a generation of new and old millennials makes sense due to the influence of the time period in which they were born. It is important to understand, however, that this generation is also divided in terms of their consumption habits. According to Lee (2013) the "(…) younger end of the Millennials may still depend on their parents, but the older end of this spectrum is already experiencing their peak spending years". There is a part of this range of individuals who are already active in the labour market and who are a direct consumer of the hotel industry product. On the other hand, the younger generation Y is not yet a direct customer, since it is not financial independent. However, they have an important influencer role in the hotel industry, in this specific case.

These generation are "(…) higher educated than earlier generations, highly competent users of information and communication technologies (ICTs), and accustomed to the world of social media" (Deal *et al.,* 2010; Hershatter & Epstein, 2010; Knowske *et al.,* 2010). To Schroer (2015), this generation is not loyal to brands, once they prefer to diversity the range of options and love new experiences. They are people that don't like to follow traditional marketing channels, since they prefer electronical marketing communication channels. This generation have "(…) a strong attraction to stylish products and a stylist lifestyle" (Sima, 2016). Twenge *et al*. (2010) add that millennials give more value to leisure activities and family time than to their employment wage conditions. Briefly, this generation are addicted to technology and loves all things that it provides, like social media.

This range of individuals is considered a complex and contradictory consumer segment and they are revolutionising the hotel industry. According to Sima (2016), the generation Y "(…) considered that the hotel experience is less about him and more about his online entourage". The hotels need to focus and adapt some things in order to full field the needs of generation Y. This adaptation is really important once this generation "(…) are more likely to support a company or brand that aligns with their expectations or standards, rather than just buying" (Kadieva & Filipova, 2017). According to Kadieva and Filipova (2017), this generation has an

individual buying culture, once they value more the object, but they want to have the possibility of use the original function of that object.

Several studies were made concerning what does the Generation Y appreciate in the Hotel Sector. Generation Y doesn't give much importance to the bedrooms and prefer public areas that allow them to socialize with each other (Sima, 2016). To Kadieva and Filipova (2017), it exists a few issues that these individuals appreciate, such as, the possibility of electronic registration in the hotel before arrival, the existence of charging stations for mobile phones and other electronic devices in the common areas. This generation also appreciate the possibility of access to free high-speed internet service throughout the hotel and the existence of an online platform where they can find general information about the essential touristic places and main attractions.

1.3.2. The distinct impact of Social Media on the generations

The different ages that each generation presents leads to distinct characteristics and the way that they are influenced is also distinct. While some of the generations born or live in a technological world others learn to use it but don't born in a digital wold, due to that reason, it is normal that the youngest generations use more the online communication channels than the oldest generations. The influence that social media will have on client's quality perception of their hotel's services will also be different for each generation of customers, once they react different to the evolution of technology.

The oldest people that takes part of the baby boomers' generation are characterized to be curious about the technological use and features but don't resource that much to them, once they prefer "(…) personalized attention in the form of physical staff. They prefer booking with a human voice over the phone but do not mind booking online if a choice is not provided" (Sima, 2016). Considering the previous information, it is easy to understand that this generation will not be in a huge scale influence by social media, once they are people that always search for trust, reliable and safety information, which sometimes are one of the big critiques pointed to social media. On other hand, since this generation choose physical contact instead of virtual world, it is to be expected that they make less use of social media when they want to acquire information from some service or in this specific case from some hotel establishment.

Generation X is a generation that, although is used to dealing with technology, is not as focused on it as generation Y. Due to this reason, it is known that these people have as characteristics realism and consideration, it is expected that these people are moderately influenced by social media.

Regarding the generation Y, the situation is exactly the opposite of the baby boomers, since this is the generation that is most rapidly influenced by social media. This occur because these people were born in the digital age and are used to using technology daily to capture information and successively make decisions with that in mind. According to Sima (2016) millennials are "(…) less about face-to-face employee-guest contact and more about self-service and reliable technology. The Marketing of the hotel chain is also re-imagined, and value is placed on an Instagram guestbook, avoiding traditional marketing. This recognises that most Gen-Ys are easily influenced by social media". According to Sima (2016), generation Y is the one that this influenced by peer pressure through Social Media.

Generation X is a generation that, although is used to dealing with technology, is not as focused on it as generation Y. Due to this reason, it is known that these people have as characteristics realism and consideration, it is expected that these people are moderately influenced by social media.

1.3.3. Social Media influence on client's perception

The technological development and the introduction of new methods of communication produce some changes in the customer behaviour towards brands. According to Cantallops and Salvi (2014), the new communication methods have made companies shift the focus of their Marketing strategies, especially in hotel industry. Social media stands out as one of the most important communication channels nowadays and are consider the "(…) the most appropriate tools for tourism firms for communicating with customers and building effective relationships with them, enabling the capture of real knowledge from the market" (Escobar-Rodríguez & Carvajal-Trujillo, 2013). Companies use this communication channel frequently to reach out a huge number of possible and repeat customers, once it impact on the information search and decision behaviours.

It is also crucial for Hotels to have a digital presence and to understand what their clients think about their services honestly. It is important to highlight that a positive perception of customers will generate a positive motivation about a hotel. On the other side, if this perception is negative, it is expected that there is no motivation from the customer's side. According to Seth (2012), hotels try to engage their potential customers throughout social media, usually get their customers to spend more in their services and to have a higher number of repeat clients.

1.3.3.1. The influence of Online Reviews on client's perception

The online Reviews, as was said previously, can be seen as e-WOM, that is the word-of-mouth throughout online features. According to Duan *et al.* (2008) the word-of- mouth "(…) has been recognized as one of the most influential resources of information transmission since the beginning of society, especially for experience goods". The increase importance of social media to influence customers relates to the fact that "online generated content is perceived as highly credible an in fact, more so than information attributed to the hospitality entity" (Starkov & Mechoso, 2008).

Online Reviews can influence the attitude of consumers towards a product through two effects: the awareness effect and the persuasive effect. The awareness effect "(…) indicate that reviews convey the existence of the product and thereby put it in the choice set of consumers" (Duan et *al.*, 2008). In the other hand, according to Duan *et al.* (2008) the persuasive effect has as an objective "(…) to shape consumers' attitudes and evaluation towards the product and ultimately influence their purchase decision".

This communication channel influence customers in different ways. Firstly according to Gretzel *et al.* (2008) the online reviews "(…) increase travellers' confidence during decision making, reduce risk, assist them in selecting accommodation and therefore facilitate decision making". The online reservation represents a real reliable source of influence for hotel clients and the fact that "consumers visit on average almost 14 different travel-related sites with about three visits per site, and carry out nine travel related searches on search engines" (UNWTO, 2014) in other to find information about the quality of a hotel shows the huge importance gave by customers to this channel of communication. It is known that customers resource to online reviews in different stages of the travel planning process: before travel; during the trip and after the trip, with different purposes. Due to that fact the influence that online reviews have on clients are not only restricted to the moment when they are searching for accommodation but regarding all the process.

This influence that online review sites have on customers can be positive or negative, once the online reviews can be also negative and positive. Due to this is it important that companies be aware of what is happening in the online review sites and aware of the feedback that customers gave to them in order to protect their own image. Consequently, is crucial that companies, in this specific case Hotels establishments, do a correct management of the customers' opinions (Sidali *et al.*, 2009). According to O'Connor (2010) there are a specific strategy to manage social media called "the social Media Management Continuum". This strategy gives some advices to hotel managers about how the stages that they should follow in

order to manage correctly social media, being them: monitorization, presence, activity and commitment.

Social Media also allows customers to have to look up to reviews and ratings published by previous real customers, which gave them more security in their future purchase and a concrete idea about the features and the quality of the Hotel services. Furthermore, there are several social media which have a huge impact on customers perceptions, but it is also known that since the development of social media platforms, online ratings and online reviews have become the key influencers in brand perceptions and consequently, on customers purchase decision.

1.3.3.2. The influence on Instagram on client's perception

Not only online reviews have the capability of influence hotel client's perception about their quality, but also Instagram have this capability two. Instagram is a photo sharing online networks that have been used nowadays in advertising, promotion, marketing and in providing information services (Hoffman & Novak, 1996; Sweeney, 2000; Doolin *et al.*, 2002). According to Baker (2015), nowadays "(…) 48% of Instagram users rely on Instagram to find new destination, 35% to discover a new place".

This communication channel has these different roles and this ability, once photographs are meaning the medium of capturing reality (Stepchenkova & Zhan, 2013). Instagram will allow customers to have a true representation of what the Hotels will be, contrary to the edition that the travel magazines and websites can do. "Images have an immense impact on consumers' purchasing behaviour because they provide a way for consumers to make a visual connection with a product before they buy" (Tuckman, 2012).

On the other hand, Instagram has also as a function the contribution to the tourist opportunity of sharing their experiences with others (Groves & Timothy, 2001). When potential customers are trying to form an opinion about the quality of a hotel and are confronted with previous clients real previous experiences will tend to be influenced by them and construct an image about that according to what have seen and read.

To Klie (2015) exist an increasing tendency to people communicate and be influenced by the visual content, which represents for hotel's managers a opportunity to invest in the communication to their customers throughout this channel of communication due to their huge impact on clients and in their decisions.

Chapter 2
Methodology

2.1. Introduction

Research methodology can be described as "the procedures by which researchers go about their work of describing, explaining and predicting phenomena" (Rajasekar *et al*., 2013). In order to understand the impact of social media in the clients' quality perception of an hotel unit and to fulfil the objectives of the investigation defined above, the most appropriate procedure was then defined.

To achieve the results to this thesis, it was defined that mixed research methods would be used to collect and analyse data. According to Johnson *et al*. (2007) the mixed research methods are "(…) the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combine elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration". The mixed research methods were chosen due to the benefits of this approach. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) this approach allows a higher degree of understanding to be formulate than a single approach. Besides of that, these approaches increase the credibility of the investigation.

It is important to clarify the differences between the two methodologies, once they will be used for different purposes. On one hand, the quantitative methodology can be described as a specific type of research methodology that "(…) deals with quantifying and analysis variables in order to get results. It involves the utilization and analysis of numerical data using specific statistical techniques to answer questions like who, how much, where, when, how many, and how" (Apuke, 2017). On the other hand, the qualitative methods are "(…) usually described as inductive, with the underlying assumptions being that reality is a social construct, that variables are difficult to measure, complex and interwoven, that there is a primacy of subject matter and that the data collected will consist of an insider's viewpoint" (Rovai *et al*., 2014).

First, a previous selection and a careful analysis of scientific articles that were relevant to understand the theorical framework of the topic understudy was made. Then, after the theorical background and focusing on the objectives established for this thesis, a quantitative and a qualitative instruments were developed and applied, a questionnaire and an interview, respectively.

2.2 Research Context

Considering the growing relevance of the digital world on the Hotel Industry nowadays and on its clients, it become necessary the use of the real life context to came up with some relevant conclusions. Both, qualitative and quantitative methodology were applied in real life context to explore the relationship between the social media websites and the clients' perception.

In order to study in detail this relationship between social media sites, in particular online review sites and Instagram, and the customers' quality perception of a hotel in a real context, this investigation was applied in hotels and hotel chains that are operating in the Portuguese market, once it is necessary to explore how this relationship occurs in Portugal. Besides of that, was also applied in the real context of the client's point of view, so this methodology was applied in a convenience sample of the generation Y.

It is relevant to note that Portugal faced a global pandemic, due to the COVID-19 virus, during the period in which this investigation took place. This controverted period that the country went through led to the majority of hotel units being closed for a long period of time. However, in order to follow the objectives defined, the present methodology was applied at a qualitative and quantitative level.

2.3 Research Design and Instruments

Regarding the research design, it is important to clarify the type of study, research and methods chosen. This research will contain both a descriptive and an exploratory study (Table 2.1). The descriptive study is the one that is "(…) used to describe a single variable or population completely, accurately, and thoroughly" (Brink & Wood, 1998). This study type is usually related with quantitative research. The type of methods that should be applied to this research type, it "(…) includes observation, questioning, available data, projective techniques, physical assessment" (Brink & Wood, 1998), which corresponds to the reality of the questionnaire. Thus the methodology that will be applied is.

The exploratory study, is the one that have as the main purpose "(…) develop valid definitions of a concept, describe a process, or yield beginning theories that explain the phenomenon under study" (Brink & Wood, 1998). To Brink and Wood (1998), this type of study is an option for qualitative research with, in the majority of the cases, a small sample, from 1 to 20 individuals. Having this in mind, the methodology that will be applied is an interview.

Type of Study	Type of Research	Type of Method
Descriptive	Quantitative	Questionnaire
Exploratory	Qualitative	Interview

Table 2.1: Research design

Source: Own elaboration

After analysing different studies regarding the topic of this dissertation (Appendix number A), it was possible to conclude that the methodology instruments more often used are the questionnaire and the interviews. According to Harris and Brown (2010) "structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews are often used in mixed method studies to generate confirmatory results". Thus, having the theorical studies has a base for the methodology decision, this study will use a qualitative and quantitative instrument, in order to enrich the investigation.

In order to be able to build the sample, it is necessary to define the sampling model that was used to obtain the data that support this research. There are two types of sampling methods, probability sampling methods and non-probability sampling methods. Probability sampling is the method in which "(...) every item in the population has an equal chance of being included in sample" (Taherdoost, 2016). On the other hand, non- probability sampling is the one that "often associated with case study research design and qualitative research" (Taherdoost, 2016). There are several sampling methods of each type researchers can choose from. Considering this specific study, we select one of the non-probabilistic sampling methods called convenience sampling, which consists of methods in which "(...) use participants because they are often readily and easily available" (Taherdoost, 2016). According to Ackoff (1953), this sampling method is especially relevant for students, as it is one of the least expensive and easy to use methods.

2.3.1. Interview

The qualitative method of this Thesis work includes the development and application of a one-to-one semi-structured interview. To Creswell (2009), interviews are primarily done in qualitative research and occur when researchers ask one or more participants general, open-ended questions and record the answers. This type of qualitative methodology allows the possibility of understanding in depth the meaning of important themes and subjects.

An one-to-one semi-structured interview (Appendix number C) was developed and applied in order to achieve results for one specific objective, understand the opinion of the Hotel services about the impact that social media have on the quality' perception of customers of the Generation Y. This one-to-one interviewer format was chosen, since it is the most common interview type for education research. Regarding the choice of a semi-structured interview according to Bell and Waters (2014) most of the interviews nowadays consist of a blend of structured and untrusted, once it enables the flexibility of this methodology instrument.

This interview was applied to people working on hotels in the Portuguese market, with the roles of Front-Office, Marketing or Communication Managers, between the months of June and August. Since we were facing a global pandemic during the data collection time, as mentioned above, these interviews were performed via video call or telephone and the number of interviewers were lower than planned in the beginning of this thesis. As said before, this interview has as main focus one of the goals defined for this Thesis work and thus an interview guide with five questions were constructed to better understand the opinion of the hotel service providers about the impact that online site reviews and Instagram, social media, have on the quality perception of the clients.

In order to safeguard that during the interview no information were lost or misunderstood, it was audiotaped with the authorization of all participants. There was also guaranteed the protection of the interviewers' confidential data.

Despite the controversial situation that the country is facing, which ended up affecting the data collection, four interviews were carried out.

2.3.2. Questionnaire

The quantitative method of this Thesis work includes the development and application of an online questionnaire. This type of methodology has many utilities, being one of the most relevant the possibility to understand what the majority of people think about a specific subject (O'Leary, 2014). The choice of an online questionnaire has as main advantages the ability to obtain quickly a large number of answers from people of the desired generation.

As previously said, the online questionnaire was then developed in order to achieve the following objectives: Identify the role of social media as an influencer on the hotels 'quality perception of the costumers, specifically the ones belonging to the Generation Y; understand if there are a relevant influence of social media on the quality perception; comprise in what way consumers change their attitude towards an hotel unit service quality, having in mind the information obtained throughout social media channels; Find out if it is Instagram or Online

Site Reviews have more influence on costumers of the Generation Y; Understand which consumers, inside the Generation Y, are more influenced by social media.

The google forms program was used to make the questionnaire and the same was shared through social media network sites. It was applied on people of generation Y (born between the year for 1981 and 2000). This questionnaire was considered for the target population (Generation Y) and was designed to different targets within the target population. First, the generation Y1, composed by individuals aged between 20 and 39 years old who already have their own income and are directly influenced by social media in their purchases. Secondly, the generation Y2, individuals aged between 20 and 39 years old, who influence other potential consumers, since they do not yet have their own income.

The question typology of the questionnaire is closed answer questions. Closed answer questions can be defined according to Dohrenwend (1965) as those that can be replied with short answers and with a limited number of possibilities. Respondents only need to select the answer that better meets their believes and their own opinion. This type of methodology has as main advantages the facilitation on the quantification of responses and their subsequent statistical treatment. This option also allows the easy comparison across the several answers and prevents information for being lost. There are different types of closed answers in the questionnaire, such as dichotomous type, multiple choice and scales. Dichotomous responses imply that there are two mutually exclusive alternatives, such as yes/no, true/false, etc. Multiple choice are those in which can be selected more than one answer, according to the respondents beliefs, opinions and experiences. Finally, the scale typology is the most common and consists of responses in which respondents can select an answer using a scale.

The questionnaire is divided into nine different sections. The first section is a simple introduction to the questionnaire content and presentation. The second section named "Sociodemographic Profile", allows collecting sociodemographic data of the population studied and also understanding whether the person answering is working or not. In order to proceed with the questionnaire, the respondent was guided to the questions corresponding to generation Y1 or Y2, defined to this studied. From section three onwards, the questionnaire is divided into six sections, three for generation Y1 and three for generation Y2. The third and sixth sections are named "Use of social media – Generation Y1" and "Use of social media – Generation Y2", respectively. These sections aim to assess the respondents' familiarity with social media and the perceived social media's degree of influence on the quality of the hotel units. The fourth and seventh sections are named "Instagram – Generation Y1" and "Instagram – Generation Y2", respectively. These sections aim to understand the interviewees' familiarity

with Instagram and to evaluate the degree of influence that they attribute to Instagram on their perception of an hotel's quality. The fifth and eighth sections are named "Online Site Reviews – Generation Y1" and "Online Site Reviews – Generation Y2", respectively. These sections were inserted in this questionnaire in order to understand the respondents' familiarity with Online Site Reviews and to assess the degree of influence that they attribute to Online Site Reviews in relation to the quality perception of the hotel units. Section number nine is only to submit the form. Throughout sections three, four, five, six, seven and eight, closed-ended questions and questions in which respondents respond according to a Likert scale from 1 to 5 according to your degree of agreement (1 – Strongly Disagree; 5 – Strongly Agree).

A pre-test was applied before the divulgation of this questionnaire on social media. This pre-test consist in the application of the questionnaire that will be used to make the research to a small number of people in order to identify possible mistakes and problems. This process allows the identification of redundant questions, high number of questions and subsequently excessive questionnaire time and incoherence's that may exist on it. This pre-test was applied to three people who belonged to the target that is being studied and that after the divulgation of the questionnaire do not belong to the population that is being analysed. This questionnaire was divulged in the social media between July and August and it was possible to collect a total of 420 responses.

2.4. Data Treatment Approach

It is important to clarify that primary data and secondary data was used to this research. Primary data are "(…) facts and information collected specifically for the purpose of the investigation at hand" (Rabiansky, 2003), once secondary data can be describe as "(…) facts and information gathered nor for the immediate study at hand but for some other purpose" (Rabiansky, 2003). The primary data that was collected throughout the methodology specifically designed for this thesis are the data from the interviews and from the questionnaire. Considering the secondary data, it was used data from scientific articles, statistics websites and Thesis with the goal of complementing and have a depth know-how about the subject of this research.

In order to analyse all the data collected from the qualitative and the quantitative methodology, sources of primary data, a data analysis approach was planned and further applied.

A content analysis will be done in order to analyse in depth all the information collected in the interviews. According to Cole (1988), content Analysis is "(…) a method of analysing written, verbal or visual communication messages". This research method is responsible for

"(…) making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context, with the purpose of providing knowledge, new insights, a representation of facts and a practical guide to action" (Krippendorff, 1980).

In order to analyse the data collecting in the online questionnaires, it will be used SPSS statistics for a descriptive analysis and manage the data previously collected. This statistical program was chosen due to their portability and to its different statistical features, that will allow to analyse of the relation between the different variables, particularly between the influence of social media and the quality perception on the clients, in order to achieve the objectives previously defined.

Chapter 3
Results' Analysis

3.1. Quantitative Analysis

The quantitative method of this Thesis work was the development and application of a online questionnaire (Appendix D). This questionnaire was used and designed in order to answer some objectives, such as: Identify the role of social media as an influencer of the customers' hotels quality perception, specifically the ones belonging to the Generation Y; Understand if there is a relevant influence of social media on the quality perception; Comprise in which way consumers change their attitude towards an hotel unit service quality, having in mind the information obtained throughout social media channels; Find out if it is Instagram or Online Site Reviews that have higher influence on Generation Y customers; Understand which consumers, inside the Generation Y, are more influenced by social media.

This Chapter will contain the analysis made in SPSS Statistic Software to obtain answers to the objectives previously defined. First, a characterization of the sample under study will be presented, then the results of the different statistical analyses that will answer the different objectives presented.

3.1.1. Sample Characterization

A total of 420 responses were collected, but since there were constituents in the sample who did not have an Instagram account and who provided invalid responses for the study, the sample is made up of 373 individuals.

Regarding the gender of the sample, the majority of them, 277 individuals (74.3%), are female and 93 individuals (24.9%) are male. There are also 3 individuals (0.8%) of individuals in the sample who belong to another gender.

The majority of the sample members, 316 individuals (84.7%), were born between 2000 and 1995, thus being the most representative age group of the sample. The second most representative age group in this sample are those born between 1994 and 1990, representing 43 individuals (11.5%) individuals. Those born between 1989 and 1984, 14 individuals (3.8%), are the least representative years of birth in the sample.

The majority of the individuals, 359 individuals (96.2%) are Portuguese. Only 14 individuals (3.8 %) members of the sample from another nationality.

Finally, regarding the current occupation, the majority of the sample, 252 individuals (66%) are students, followed by the employees on third party, 80 individuals (20.9 %). The minority of the sample, 2 individuals (0.5%) are employee one's own.

The variable current occupation allows the understanding of the population percentage that belongs to the Y1 and Y2 generation. Generation Y1 is made up of individuals who have their own income, on the other hand, individuals who study or do not currently have income are considered an integral part of the Y2 population. Thus, the majority of the sample belongs to generation Y2, 254 individuals (68.1%) and only 119 individuals (31.9%) belongs to generation Y1.

Gender	Frequency (N)	%
Female	277	74.3
Male	93	24.9
Other	3	0.8
Year of birth		
1984-1989	14	3.8
1990-1994	43	11.5
1995-2000	316	84.7
Nationality		
Portuguese	359	96.2
Other	14	3.8
Current Occupation		
Employed on behalf of a third party	79	21.2
Employee one's own	2	0.5
Student	244	65.4
Part-time Worker	3	0.8
Unemployed	10	2.7
Working Student	35	9.4
Total	382	100

Table 3.1: Sample Characterization

Source: Own elaboration based on SPSS outputs

3.1.2. Internal Consistency

This quantitative instrument of research, the questionnaire, has Likert scales on it. In this type of scales, it is necessary to measure the relevance and the reliability of it, in order to assure that researchers are collecting accurate data. To Gliem and Gliem (2003), it is imperative to perform the calculation of the Cronbach's alpha, when in a specific research a Likert-type scales is being used. In statistics, there are a measure that "(…) offer a measure of internal consistency of a

scale or test, expressed as a number between 0 and 1" (Cronbach, 1951). It is also important to add that Cronbach's alpha values have a specific kind of interpretation. According to Hill and Hill (2012) if the value of Cronbach's alpha is less than 0.7 the internal consistency will be weak, if the value is higher than 0.7 is reasonable, if it is higher than 0.8 the internal consistency will be good and if this value is higher than 0.9 it will be excellent.

In order to measure the internal consistency of the Likert-type scales that exist in the questionnaire under analysis, it will be present bellow an analysis of the Cronbach alpha of the six different groups of Likert-type scales questions. It was done six different analysis, once the questions were aggregate according to the theme. In the first three group of questions, there are questions relatable to the generation Y1 Social Media influence, Instagram Influence and Online Site Review Influence, respectively. The group of questions number four to six are linked with the generation Y2 social media influence, Instagram influence and online site reviews influence, respectively.

After the analysis of the values of the Cronbach's alpha, it is possible to state that the variables present in the Likert-type scales questions, present bellow in the table 3.2 develop from the data contained in the Appendix E, have an internal consist considered good, once all of them have the value of the Cronbach's Alpha greater or approximately 0.8. This means that the answers of the respondents have consistency, thus being able to consider the answers given by the respondents as reliable. All groups of scale responses were analysed, since all themes will be used in the statistical analysis necessary to respond to the objectives of the thesis.

Likert- type scales questions groups (Theme)	Cronbach's alpha value
Social Media Influence (Y1)	0,839
Instagram Influence (Y1)	0,815
Online Site Reviews Influence (Y1)	0,876
Social Media Influence (Y2)	0,774
Instagram Influence (Y2)	0,823
Online Site Reviews Influence (Y2)	0,820

Table 3.2: Cronbach's Alpha values

Source: Own elaboration based on SPSS outputs

3.1.3. Objectives and further analysis

The questionnaire results will be analysed in this part of this chapter. This analysis will be done having in the mind the objectives that have been previously define in the beginning of this research. In order to achieve the answers to the objectives previously defined, it will be present in this part of the chapter several statistical analyses that will answer the objectives.

3.1.3.1. 1st, 2nd and 3rd Objective - Identify the role of social media as an influencer on the hotels 'quality perception of the costumers, specifically the ones belonging to the Generation Y | Understand if there are a relevant influence of social media on the quality perception | Comprise in what way consumers change their attitude towards an hotel unit service quality, having in mind the information obtained throughout social media channels

The questionnaire was developed with several questions that try to understand this influence that social media can have on the customers' quality perception. First, considering the data present on table 3.3 present bellow develop from the data contained in the appendix F, it is important to understand that individuals of generation Y use regularly social media, since the majority, 368 individuals (98.66%), use social media daily. Only 4 individuals (1.07%) use social media weekly. So overall, it shows that in the generation Y, the individuals are expose daily to lots of content on social media, having then a huge possibility of being influence by them.

Regularity in the use of Social Media (Gen Y | Y1 and Y2)		
	N	**%**
	373	100%
Daily	368	98,66%
Montly	1	0,27%
Weekly	4	1,07%

Table 3.3: Regularity in the use of the Social Media

Source: Own elaboration based on SPSS outputs

Individuals of the generation Y use Social Media daily and search a lot of information on it. In the questionnaire, we try to find out if they search on Social Media about Hotel services. After analysing the answers to this question, in the Table 3.4 that bellow, is it possible to state that the biggest part of the population under analysis, 299 individuals (80.2%), have already

search for information about Hotel establishments services on Social Media, which indicate that this is a channel that generation Y often use to search about this subject. Only 74 individuals (19.8%) never search for this subject on Social Media. This results, shows that the individuals of the generation Y, in generally, use this channel of communication to search information and to increase their knowledge about Hotels.

Have you used Social Media to search for information about Hotel establishments? (Gen Y| Gen Y1 and Y2)		
	N	%
	373	100%
No	74	19.8%
Yes	299	80.2%

Table 3.4: Search of information about Hotel establishments on Social Media

Source: Own elaboration based on SPSS outputs

It is necessary to analyse the questions in which the respondents answer if they have already purchase or influence anyone to purchase the hotel services influenced by Social Media. This analysis will be made with the goal to comprise in what way consumers of generation Y change their attitude toward the hotel services, having in mind the information that obtained throughout Social Media. These results will be studied separately between generation Y1 and Y2. This separation stems from the fact that it is assumed previously that the elements of gen Y1 already have their own income and have the ability to purchase, on the other hand, individuals belonging to gen Y2 do not have their own income and therefore are mere influencers of family members, friends, etc.

In Table 3.5, present bellow, it is possible to conclude that most of the members of generation Y1, 66 individuals (55.5%), never have purchase any hotel services influenced by the information that have seen on the Social Media. Further, a relevant number of sample members, 53 individuals (44.5%) reply affirmatively to this question. In reverence to the generation Y2, the scenario is really similar, once 131 individuals (51.5%) never have influence others to buy a service after having analysed its content on Social Media, contrary to that 123 individuals (48.4%) reply affirmatively to this question (Table 3.6).

Therefore, it is not possible to state, in a statistically valid way, that Social Media radically alter and shape the attitude towards hotel service quality.

Have you purchased any hotel services influenced by Social Media? (Gen Y1)		
	N	**%**
	119	100%
No	66	55.5%
Yes	53	44.5%

Have you ever influenced someone (eg. family, friends, colleagues) to buy a hotel service after having analysed its content on Social Media? (Gen Y2)		
	N	**%**
	254	100%
No	131	51.6%
Yes	123	48.4%

Table 3.5: Influence to purchase services of Hotel establishments

Source: Own elaboration based on SPSS Output

Table 3.6: Influence in the purchase of Hotel establishment services

Source: Own elaboration based on SPSS outputs

Further, it is pertinent to analyse the Likert-type scale questions, in order to analyse deeply, the opinion of the individuals regarding the impact of social media have on their own perception about a certain hotel establishment.

Concerning this analysis, it is relevant to clarify some points. First, the typology of the scale, once in the further tables will always appear a number between 1 to 5, meaning completely disagree, partly disagree, neither disagree nor agree, partly agree and completely agree, respectively. Second, it is important to make clear that the sample considered for this results is 299 individuals, since the individuals that have previously state that never have search any information about hotel establishments on social media were excluded from this analysis and from the following analysis of the questionnaire, in order to decrease the error margin and the reliability of the analysis.

In the tables bellow, figure 3.1, it is present the frequencies analysis to each item of the Liker-type scale regarding the Social Media impact in the generation Y1 and Y2. Concerning the affirmation "I use Social Media when I am planning on which Hotel I will be staying on my next trip", the most representative part of the generation Y, 124 individuals (41.5%) answer "Partly agree", followed by the second largest representation in the sample, 117 individuals (39.1%), that answered "Completely agree". This means that approximately 80% of the all elements of the sample agree with this affirmation. It can also be added that the average of the answers to this question is 3.92 (Appendix number G), making it possible to state that they usually use social media when planning which hotel to stay in, meaning that this communication channel is used as an information search engine and a potential influencer for potential Generation Y customers.

Concerning the affirmation "Social Media is the main way I use to make my decision regarding a hotel service", there is a wide dispersion of results, with no percentage of responses that stands out in relation to the others. Regarding the average response in relation to the opinion regarding this statement, which is present in Appendix G, it has a value of 3, which means "Neither agree or disagree". This value makes the analysis of the variable inconclusive, since it is impossible to conclude with certainty whether social media are in fact the most used medium by potential consumers of this generation to make a decision regarding hotels.

In reverence to the affirmation "I feel influenced by the content that is present in Social Media", it is possible to observe in the figure 3.1 bellow, that almost half of the individuals in the sample, 145 individuals (48.5%), answered "Partly agree", followed by the answer "Completely agree" with 94 individuals with this opinion corresponding to 31.4 % of respondents. That said, approximately 80% of respondents to this statement have a favourable position about it, which is reflected in the average of responses, 3.95 (Appendix G). After presenting these results, it can then be inferred that on average the constituent elements of this generation Y sample feel somewhat influenced by the content that is present in Social Media.

Lastly the statistical results of the statement, "My perception of quality regarding a hotel service has already changed after consulting information found in the social media" present on the figure 3.1, shows that the most representative part of the generation Y, 113 individuals (37.8%) answer "Partly agree", followed by the second largest representation in the sample, 83 individuals (27.8%), that answered "Completely agree". It also exists 27%, 51 individuals, that do not present a negative opinion regarding this statement. It was also found that the average of opinions related to this statement has a value of 3.63 (Appendix G), thus can be inferred that if this value is above 3.5, there is on average an affirmative opinion with respect to this statement. Then, it is possible to conclude that on average the elements of generation Y, some of them in a safer way than others, agree that after having searched information in the social media about the hotel units, their perception of quality changed.
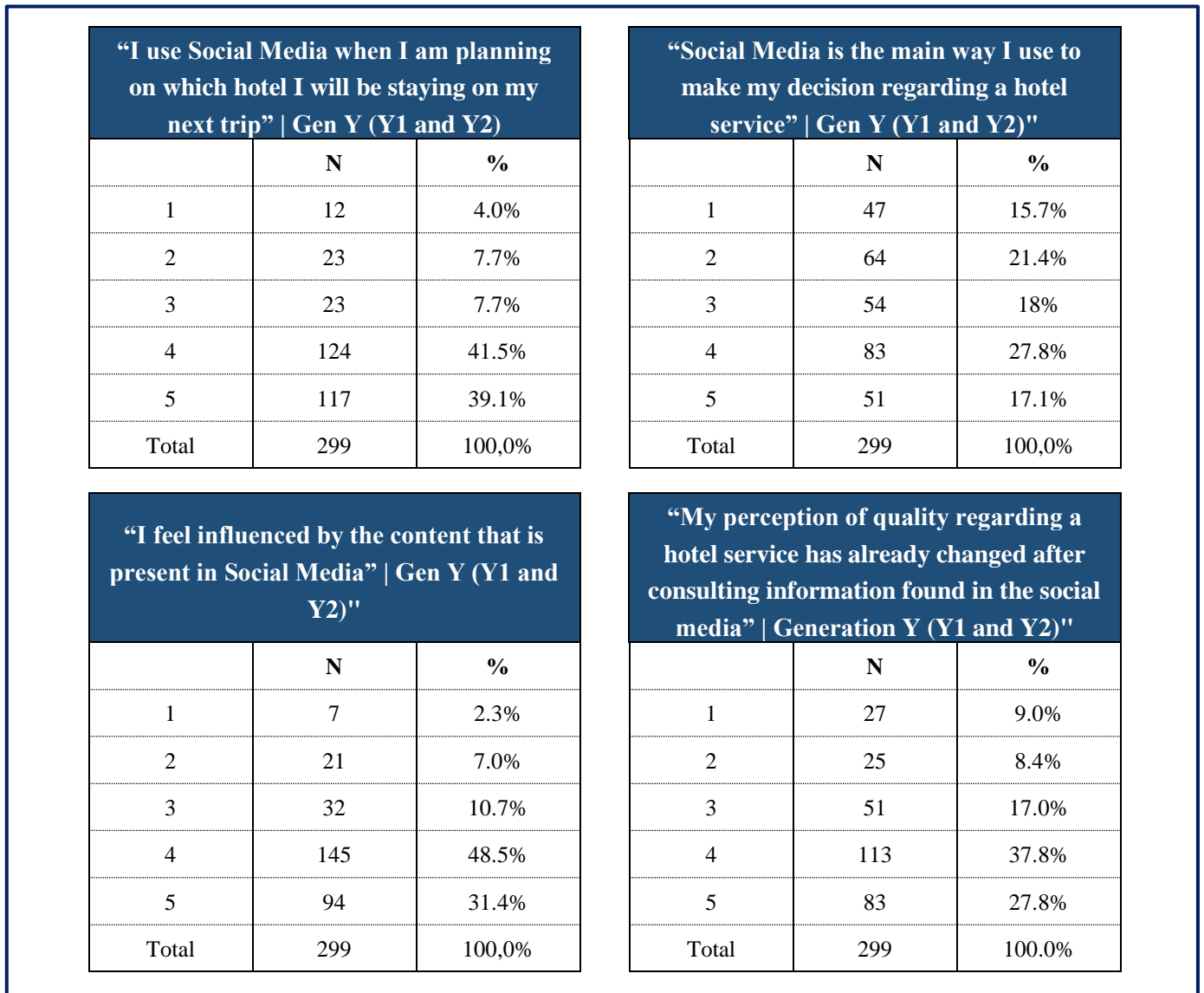
“I use Social Media when I am planning on which hotel I will be staying on my next trip”	Gen Y (Y1 and Y2)		
	N	%
1	12	4.0%
2	23	7.7%
3	23	7.7%
4	124	41.5%
5	117	39.1%
Total	299	100,0%

“Social Media is the main way I use to make my decision regarding a hotel service”	Gen Y (Y1 and Y2)"		
	N	%
1	47	15.7%
2	64	21.4%
3	54	18%
4	83	27.8%
5	51	17.1%
Total	299	100,0%

“I feel influenced by the content that is present in Social Media”	Gen Y (Y1 and Y2)"		
	N	%
1	7	2.3%
2	21	7.0%
3	32	10.7%
4	145	48.5%
5	94	31.4%
Total	299	100,0%

“My perception of quality regarding a hotel service has already changed after consulting information found in the social media”	Generation Y (Y1 and Y2)"		
	N	%
1	27	9.0%
2	25	8.4%
3	51	17.0%
4	113	37.8%
5	83	27.8%
Total	299	100.0%

Figure 3.1: Social Media Impact - Liker-Type Scale Questions
Source: Own elaboration based on SPSS outputs

3.1.3.2. 4th Objective - Find out if it is Instagram or Online Site Reviews that have more influence on costumers that take part of the Generation Y

It will be analysed several outputs related to the Instagram and Online Site Reviews influence, with the objective of recognise if it is Instagram or Online Site Reviews that has a huge influence on costumers of the generation Y.

First, in figure 3.2 bellow, it is possible to acknowledge that only 2 elements of the sample do not have an Instagram account, which indicate that this channel of communication is well known to this group of individuals (Generation Y). In the figure 3.3 that is also present bellow, there is a graphic that shows the number of individuals that have already consult an online site review. Throughout this graphic it is possible to state that only 14 elements of the sample have

never consulted an Online Site Review. These results show that almost all the elements of the sample know and use this online networking sites.

About the comparison between the use of these two different channels of communication, it can be highlighted that the sample of the generation Y that respond to this questionnaire use and knows well the Instagram rather the online site reviews.

It is important to add that the elements of the sample that do not have an account in Instagram, were excluded from the others analysis regarding Instagram influence, and the ones that never visited an online site review was also excluded for the analysis of the channel of communication influence.
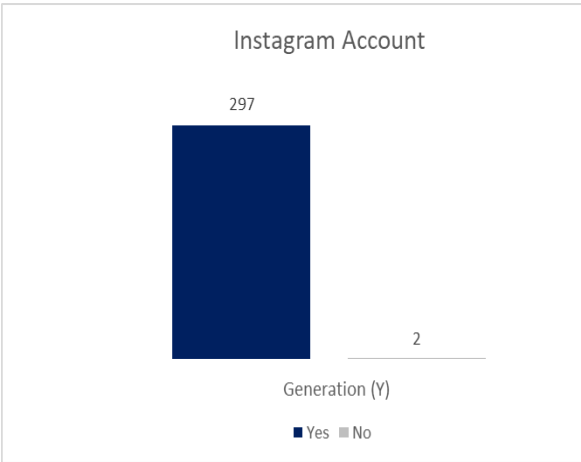

Figure 3.2: Instagram Account
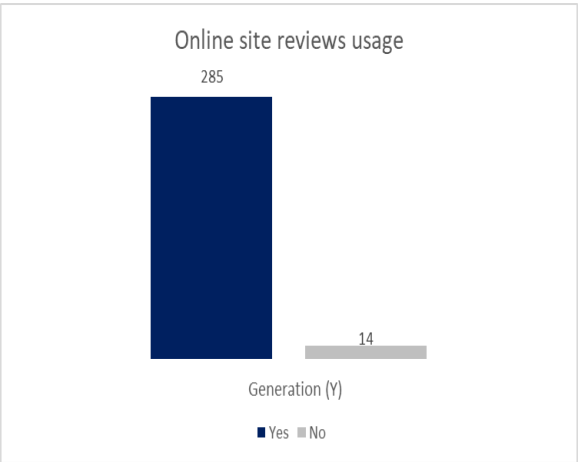Source: Own elaboration based on SPSS outputs

Figure 3.3 : Online Site Reviews Usage
Source: Own elaboration based on SPSS outputs

Having in mind that it is necessary to find out if it is online site reviews or Instagram that have a huge influence in the individuals of the generation Y, it will be present bellow two tables, table 3.7 and 10, that have the average of the opinion of the respondents regarding three different Likert-type scale affirmations. The affirmations that will be examine for this propose are: "I am influenced by the content that is present on Instagram/Online Site Reviews", "I have already changed my perception of quality of a hotel service after having perceived content about them on Instagram/ Online Sire Reviews" and "Instagram/Online Site Reviews is the main way I use to make my decision regarding hotel establishments".

Comparing the average of the respondents' answers regarding their affirmative or negative opinion to the affirmation "I am influenced by the content that is present on Instagram" and "I am influence by the content that is present on Online Site Reviews", it can be observed that in average individuals feels more influenced by the content present on Online Site Reviews (4.23 in average) than on Instagram (3.76 in average). Otherwise, individuals still feel influence by

the content present on Instagram, once the average of the respondents for this average is 3.75, being this value superior to 3.5 correspond to the answer "Partly agree". To sum up, the individuals of the generation Y feels somewhat, ones completely and other partly, influenced by the content present on the two channels of communication. Then, is fundamental to highlight that this influenced is more evident in the Online Site Reviews.

In respect to the affirmations "I have already changed my perception of quality of a hotel service after having perceived content about them on Instagram" and "I have already changed my perception of quality of a hotel service after having perceived content about them on Online Site Reviews", the position of the respondents are different for the two different social media channels of communication. It can be seen through the data, that the average of the answers of the statement that concerns Instagram answers is 3.24, which corresponds to the answer "Neither agree or disagree". This result makes it inconclusive to understand whether there is actually a change in the perception of quality related to hotels by generation Y. On the other side, the results of the analysis of this statement regarding Online Site Reviews are clear. This statement has an average response of 4.12, which means that, on average, respondents stated that they partially agreed with the affirmation. It is also possible to add that, being the average higher than 4, it is statistically possible to infer that there was also a significant percentage of respondents who said they completely agreed with this statement. After making an individual analysis of each statement, it is concluded that comparing Instagram with Online Site Reviews, there is a noticeable change in perception of quality when consulting information on Online Site Reviews, which is not notary on Instagram.

Analysing the answers that allow to understand if potential customers of the generation Y agree or disagree that Instagram or Online Site Reviews are the main way that they use to make their decision regarding hotel establishments, the results are quite clear. Through the average of the respondents' opinions, 2.09 which corresponds to the answer "Party disagree", it is clear that when it comes to Instagram, the majority of Generation Y individuals do not consider this communication channel as the first option to build and shape their opinion of a particular Hotel. The same does not happen with Online Site Reviews, since the results showed that the average response is equivalent to 4.07, which corresponds to the answer "Partly agree". This result indicates that, on average, this communication channel is considered to be to some extent the main channel used when building opinions about the hotel units.

		"I am influenced by the content that is present on Instagram" Gen Y (Y1 and Y2)	"I have already changed my perception of quality of a hotel service after having perceived content about them on Instagram" Gen Y (Y1 and Y2)	"Instagram is the main way I use to make my decision regarding hotel establishments" Gen Y (Y1 and Y2)
N	Valid	397	397	397
	Average	3,76	3,24	2,09

Table 3.7: Respondents' opinion about Instagram influence

Source: Own elaboration based on SPSS outputs

		"I am influenced by the content that is present in the Online Site Reviews" Gen Y (Y1 and Y2)	"I have already changed my perception of quality of a hotel service after having perceived content about them in Online Site Reviews" Gen Y (Y1 and Y2)	"Online Site Reviews are the main way I use to make my decision regarding hotel establishments" Gen Y (Y1 and Y2)
N	Valid	285	285	285
	Average	4.23	4.12	4.07

Table 3.8: Respondents' opinion about Online Site Reviews influence

Source: Own elaboration based on SPSS outputs

To go further in this comparison, it became interest to add that as it is possible to see in appendix H, the impact of this two communication channels in the effective purchase of the hotel services are higher for online site review rather than for Instagram. It is possible to state that the majority already purchase hotel services influenced by Online Site reviews rather than by Instagram.

3.1.3.3. 5th Objective- Understand which consumers, inside the Generation Y, are more influenced by social media

A comparative analysis of the average opinion of generation Y1 and Y2 individuals will be present, with the goal of find out if is the generation Y1 or the Y2 that is more influenced by the Social Media in general. In the table 3.9, that is present bellow, the average values of the individuals' answer for Likert-type scales related to Social Media are shown.

During the general analysis of the results in the table below, table 3.9, it is clear that in all statements, respondents of both generation Y1 and Y2 have a similar opinion. However, the results also indicate that this opinion is more evident in individuals of generation Y2, since the

average of their opinions always translates into a high value. Therefore, it shows that there is a greater number of individuals who agree more strongly with the statements.

Afterwards, the statement that concerns the opinions of the individuals regarding the fact that Social Media be the medium that they use to take a decision about a hotel, was not analyse for this propose, once it was noticed that the answers of the individuals for this affirmation was inconclusive. All other statements had a positive agreement from both individuals of generations Y1 and Y2. It can then be said that on average both individuals from Gen Y1 and from Gen Y2 agree that: they use social media when planning their next trip; feel in any way influenced by the content present on Social Media; and they partly agree that their perception of quality regarding a hotel service has changed after consulting information found in Social Media. As previously mentioned, it is observed that the average responses to the above statements were always higher in generation Y2, including in the first and second statements a value higher than 4. This value indicates statistically that in generation Y2, there is a large percentage of individuals who totally and more strongly agree that the social media content has a huge influence.

Affirmations	Average Y1	Average Y2
"I use Social Media Websites when I am planning which hotel I will be staying on my next trip"	3.6	4.23
"I feel influenced by the content that is present in Social Media"	3.82	4.07
"My perception of quality regarding a hotel service has already changed after consulting information found in social media"	3.54	3.72

Table 3.9: Average of the opinion of the Generation Y1 and Y2 about Social Media influence

Source: Own elaboration based on SPSS outputs

It was considerable valuable to the research a deeper analysis of this issue in order to try to find out if it is the generation Y1 or Y2 that are more influence by Social Media. The opinion of the individuals regarding Instagram influence and Online Site Reviews was also analyse.

Generation Y1 and Y2 feel that in some way the content present on Instagram influence their opinion about a specific Hotel, once the average of the answers was approximately 4, superior to 3.5, possible to see in the table 3.10. In the both cases the mode, that are the value that more times repeats in the answers, are 4. That said, comparing the two generations, the influence on the different sub-generations is very similar, but generation Y2 can be highlighted, as being slightly more influenced. This difference can be statistically justified, because there is

a group of individuals higher in generation Y2 than in generation Y1, who fully agree with this influence of Instagram content.

		"I am influenced by the content that is present on Instagram" (Gen Y1)	"I am influenced by the content that is present on Instagram" (Gen Y2)
N	**Valid**	89	208
Average		3,67	3,84
Mode		4	4

Table 3.10: Average of the opinion of the Generation Y1 and Y2 about Instagram influence
Source: Own elaboration based on SPSS outputs

The influence of Online Site Reviews on potential customers from both generations is similar than the one of Instagram. Although both generations, Y1 and Y2, are somewhat influenced by Online Site Reviews, this influence is more significant in generation Y2. It is observed, in table 3.11 presented below, that the average that the generation Y1 and Y2 is higher than 4, which indicates that there is a more substantial percentage of individuals who totally agree with this influence. It is possible to sustain, that, by the value of the mode being 5 in both generation Y1 and Y2.

		"I am influenced by the content that is present in the Online Site Reviews" (Gen Y1)	"I am influenced by the content that is present on Online Site Reviews" (Gen Y2)
N	**Valid**	87	208
Average		4,08	4,38
Mode		5	5

Table 3.11: Average of the opinion of the generation Y1 and Y2 about Online Site Reviews
Source: Own elaboration based on SPSS outputs

After analysing all the outputs of this sub-chapter, it was possible to understand that although both generation Y1 and Y2 are influenced by the content of social media, the generation Y2 is more significantly influenced by social media in general, Instagram and Online Site Reviews.

3.2. Qualitative Analysis

3.2.1. Interviewers Characterization

The qualitative method of this Thesis work was the development and application of an interview (Appendix C) to three different professionals in the area of marketing, communication and guest relations of different Hotels and Hotel chains establishments. Having in mind that these interviews were done with the goal of investigate the opinion of the Hotel services on the impact of social on their customers, this chapter will hold the results of this interviews.

First, it is relevant to describe the target population of this study. As said before, three Hotel business professionals were interview. In order to guarantee the protection of the interviewers' confidential data, along this chapter they will be named as Interviewee 1, 2 and 3.

The Interviewee 1 work as Front Office Manager at "Hotel da Baixa", being the person who is responsible for managing the bookings. "Hotel da Baixa" is classified as a 4-star boutique hotel, located in the heart of the city of Lisbon. This Hotel was considered, for the second consecutive year, the 4th best hotel in Lisbon and also, by Booking, as the best hotel in Lisbon with a classification of 9.5 out of 10.

The Interviewee 2 is a Marketing and Communication executive at Sheraton Cascais Resort. This professional work is closely linked to the implementation of Marketing campaigns, but also to the digital campaign management through Social Media, among other functions, which makes his input relevant for the study in question. Sheraton Cascais Resort is a luxury 5 star resort located in the heart of "Quinta da Marinha", the most exclusive area of Cascais.

The Interviewee 3 in contrast to the other interviewees, does not perform functions directly for a specific hotel. The Interviewee number 3 works for a company called United Investments Portugal (UIP). UIP is a company that owns several properties in Portugal. It presents a portfolio made up of several internationally renowned brands in the hospitality industry. UIP stands out in the areas of development and construction, investment, Real Estate and property management with a residential and hotel component (mixed-use). It is relevant to state that the interviewee number 3 collaborates with four different hotels, being an asset for the study, since it manages to have a more comprehensive perspective of this subject.

This interviewee is the Marketing and Communication Director in UIP, being directly involved in the communication management of the four hotels for which UIP contributes directly, as well as responsible for the digital strategy and management, among others responsibilities. The four hotel establishments which interviewee number 3 works directly to are: Pine Cliffs Resorts, Sheraton Cascais Resort, Hotel Porto and Hyatt Regency Lisboa. Pine

Cliffs resorts is one of the most prestigious and awarded 5-star luxury resorts in Europe, located in the south of Portugal, more specifically in Albufeira. The Sheraton Cascais, as previously mentioned, is a luxury 5-star resort located in the heart of "Quinta da Marinha", the most exclusive area of Cascais. On the other hand, Yotel Porto is the most recent project of this group, since its opening will take place in December 2020. This 4-star hotel has made a strong commitment in technology and is located in the heart of the Oporto city. Finally, the Hyatt Regency Lisboa is a 5-star hotel with a privileged location by the Tejo river, close to the historic area of Belem.

In the table number 14, present bellow, synthetize the information presented above.

	Professional Position	Hotel establishment/Hotel chain	Hotel Localization	Type of hotel establishment
Interviewee 1	Front Office Manager	Hotel da Baixa	Lisbon (Baixa)	4 Stars Hotel
Interviewee 2	Marketing and Communication Executive	Sheraton Cascais Resort	Cascais (Lisbon)	5 Stars Hotel (Resort)
Interviewee 3	Director of Marketing and Communications	1) Pine Cliffs Resorts 2) Sheraton Cascais Resort 3) Yotel Porto 4) Hyatt Regency Lisboa	1) Albufeira (Algarve) 2) Cascais (Lisbon) 3) Porto 4) Belém (Lisbon)	1) 5 starts Hotel (Luxury Resort) 2) 5 stars Hotel (Luxury Resort) 3) 4 starts Hotel 4) 5 starts Hotel

Table 3.12: Interviewees characterization
Source: Own elaboration based on SPSS outputs

3.2.2. Interviews Results

It is relevant to analyse the results of the interview (Appendix number C), in order to came up with conclusions and to fulfil the objective previously defined, understand the perception that hotel services providers have on the impact of social media on their customers. There will be develop a table (Table 3.13) with a main conclusion.

The analyse of the interview results will be divided into four different topics. The first topic, related to Social Media impact, has the main propose understanding which social media is more important for the hotel communication strategies and also to clarify, in hotel services providers perspective, what are the real impact of social media on costumers. The second topic will be the Online site Reviews, with the goal of realize what are the main advantages of this social media networking site and if it has a relevant impact on potential costumer's quality perception. The topic number three will be the impact of the Instagram and of photo-sharing on hotel

establishment potential customers. Finally, the topic number four will the Online Site Review vs Instagram, in order to understand which of these two social networking sites have more impact on generation Y customers.

3.2.2.1. Social Media impact

It is important to state the most relevant results regarding the Social Media presence and the hotel services providers' perception of its impact on potential customers.

According to the Hotel establishments services providers that were interviewed, the digital platforms more used are the Instagram, Facebook and the Hotel Review Sites. One of the interviewees stated that Instagram is the social media networking site most used by generation Y customers and is one of the communication channel that Hotels should invest on due to its considerable impact on the quality perception. It was also possible to understand that Instagram is a heavily used digital platform and, therefore, can become less popular soon, due to its massification. However, nowadays it still a source of information and contribute significantly to customers opinions and perceptions. It is important to mention that interviewees still consider Facebook as one communication channel to consider despite of its loss of relevance, especially amount the generation under study. However, this communication channel continues to be relevant for the oldest generations which explains the hotel's investment on this. Considering the Hotel review sites, it is possible to understand that they have a big impact on potential customers and, therefore, the Hotel services providers should continue to invest on them. This websites are relevant since they contain the customer reviews which are highly valuable for the potential ones.

It is also possible to understand that all online content has a visible impact on the customers opinion, once the first thing that customers do when they want to search for a Hotel establishment or form an opinion about it, is to visit the Hotel Review sites to verify what other costumers write about the hotel services. Usually, they also check on Instagram the appearance and unique services of the Hotel establishment.

It also worthy to mention that this pandemic situation strength the digital communication channels and increase the importance of its good and coherent management.

3.2.2.2. Online Site Reviews

Online Site Reviews have a visible impact on the costumer's perceptions about the service of the hotel establishments. During the interview with hotels professionals, it was possible to

understand that there are specific hotel review sites on which hotels invest more, the TripAdvisor and Booking.com.

According to the interviewees, the Online Site Reviews has as main advantages the fact that hotel site reviews represent the image of the Hotel, which make so important a continuously manage them. The online site reviews are one of the most important source of opinion formation for the costumers and allows the service providers to interact with potential and previous customers, which will influence their opinions. Another advantage is the fact that costumers could leave reviews that are not controlled, which mean that they are spontaneous and trustworthy in the future customers' perception. The opportunity to promote a hotel in this sites is another advantage of online site reviews according to the interviewees' point of view.

This channel also has a negative side and disadvantages, being the more frequently mentioned by the interviews, the impossibility of controlling what customers writes about their services. This sites also allows users to leave a review on it, without have stayed in the Hotel and experienced their services, which give little credibility to their reviews.

3.2.2.3. Instagram

The interviewees' opinion was unanimous regarding the fact that Instagram is, nowadays, the most popular social networking site among the youngest generation, specially to generation Y, and one of the most used for sharing photos. Instagram is one of the online networking sites that allows interaction between the users through photo-sharing, once is the feature that Instagram invest the most to reach potential customers. Photo-sharing is a tool with a lot of potential, due to their capacity to attract customers through the publication of photos that motivate them to search more about the Hotel and, therefore, raises customer interest and attention.

After speaking to the interviewees, it is possible to state that this digital channel has a huge relevance nowadays due to some advantages, such as the capacity of this tool to create awareness, motive and influence potential customers. In order to take advantage of all the potential that Instagram offers, interviewee 2, states that the high success that Instagram has in attracting the interest of its Hotel customers, involves a large investment in the effective management of Instagram page. This effective management involves maintaining a coherent, authentic and unique communication of the content published.

The Interviewee 1, highlight the huge impact of this online networking site on potential customers, once state that through the dissemination of photos of the hotel establishment in which the Interviewee 1 works, and the services that they offer, customers are really motivated

to explore the hotel's offers, sending often emails to the hotel in order to find out more information about it. It was understood that the publications made through Instagram impact the perception of current and potential customers at a high level, leading them to understand and discover more about the hotel services.

Instagram has also a huge potential as an influencer of the quality perception of generation Y, once, according to the interviews, this generation is highly influence not only by the hotel establishment accommodations but also for the services that it offers. So, the fact that hotel establishment promotes in their social media networks content that meet the type of activities and services that members of this generation enjoy, leads to the increase of their quality perception and their intention to purchase it. Interview 2 also added that when they promote their brunch and their sunsets on the posts and stories of Instagram, the interest of generation Y increase and the perception of they have about the hotel change.

Another feature that hotel services providers are betting on is the investment on Influencers. Instagram, a part of YouTube, is one of the social media sites that invests a lot on influencers and in which they have a huge impact on costumers. According to the Interviewees, Influencers in the Hotel Industry are famous people that for different reasons could raise costumer's awareness regarding a certain product or service. The role of Influencers in the Hotel Industry is showing hotel establishments and their services and, throughout their opinions, try to influence potential and actual customers to purchase the product sold by the hotel. Hotels services providers are investing in this type of marketing, once it can generate a high return, since if people are able to perceive that people that they have as a reference or that they admire like this hotel, they will automatically feel more motivated to research more about it. The use of Influencers as a mean of promoting and shaping consumers' perceptions can be quite effective, since they are people who normally have more followers in their personal accounts than the hotel units accounts, which will make their message reach more users of this social network.

Although this platform has numerous advantages, after the interviews, it was possible to understand that Instagram has also some disadvantages, since this online networking site does not significantly enhance the interaction between the customer and the hotel. Therefore, online site reviews gain a little more notoriety, once they allow to do this interaction in a more easy way.

3.2.2.4. Online Site Review vs Instagram

Regarding the comparison of the influence of Instagram and of Online Site Review, after asking this question to the hotel service providers, it was possible to understand their view of the impact that each of these online networking sites has on consumers. The opinion of both interviews turned out to be quite similar, agreeing that both channels of communication have an equally importance, depending on the moment in which the perception of the client in question is built. However, it was also unanimous that although both have this similar and complementary influence, for the study population, generation Y, Instagram manages to be the channel that exerts the greatest influence on the formation of perception by potential consumers.

Online Site Review and Instagram both have a concrete and visible impact on costumer, once they are complementary in that function, which means that they are both essential in this process. In the interview 1 point of view, both have a defined role and influence potential customers in different times, since Online Site Reviews are the one that have more influence in the booking phase and Instagram has the role of maintain the interest and a high quality perception of a hotel establishment at the post-booking phase. This Interview also add, that in case that potential customers have a negative quality perception about the Hotel in the Online Site Reviews, they will not check out its Instagram account. In the view of the interviews, it is difficult to decide which one have more impact on the customers, once usually people resort to both to build their own perception and both have their unique and important role.

To Interview number 2 and 3, both online networking sites have a determinant impact on clients, but once the population in study is the generation Y, they think that Instagram will be the one that with bigger impact on their quality perception, due to the knowledge that this social media is what the majority of the people that take part of the generation Y use daily and prioritize when they are searching for something new.

	Interviewee 1	Interviewee 2	Interviewee 3
Presence on Social Media	Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and Hotel Review Sites (Booking and TripAdvisor)	Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, LinkedIn, Google my business and Hotel Review Sites (Booking and TripAdvisor)	Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Youtube and Hotel Review Sites (Booking and TripAdvisor)
Social networking sites that most impact costumers	Instagram and Hotel Reviews sites	Instagram and Hotel Review Sites	Instagram
Advantages of Online Site Reviews	- Allows the interaction with customers; - Allows customers acquire previous information about Hotel establishments; - They are the image of the Hotels establishments; - Help in promoting hotels establishments.	- Relevant for opinion formation; - The possibility that online review sites offer to give potential customers the possibility to access spontaneous opinions, which are not controlled by the hotel establishments.	- It offers the possibility to monitor the quality of the service that is provided internally; -Can positively influence potential customers.
Disadvantages of Online Site Reviews	- Allows people to leave reviews without having been using the hotel service; - There is a possibility that there is little validity of the criticisms	- The inability to control the opinions that are placed on these types of sites, as well as the information that reaches the potential consumer.	- There is the possibility that potential clients will be negatively influenced by the reviews, thus changing their perception about a hotel establishment.
Photo-Sharing influence on costumers	- Used to create awareness and create interest in customers	- Very high weight in terms of the influence of potential customers; - High investment in a coherent and authentic management of this communication channel.	- Influences potential customers a lot, especially through influencers; - Used as the main content management strategy.
Instagram vs Online Site Reviews: Biggest influence on Generation Y	- They influence at different times; - At the time of booking the Hotel, online sites reviews is the one that influence the most, while at the time of post-booking what influences the most is Instagram.	- The biggest influence for the target being studied is Instagram.	- Equally important, since they are complementary, but for the target that is being studied, what influences most is Instagram.

Table 3.13: Interviewees Results

Source: Own elaboration based on Interviews Results

3.3. Tools

In this sub-chapter, the tools used to collect and analyse qualitative and quantitative data will be mentioned. The changes that were necessary to make since the initial number of quantitative data collected during the analysis were also mentioned.

The tools that were used to collect the qualitative data, was the iPhone's sound recording tool, called a Dictaphone, which allowed the interviews to be recorded so that the data could later be examined. The quantitative data will be analysed with, Google's free online form

creation tool, called Google Forms. This tool then allowed responses to the questionnaire previously designed for the purpose of the study to be collected. It was also used to disseminate the questionnaire, the social media channels Facebook and Instagram, which were essential for data collection.

To analyses the data, only quantitative data were used. IBM SPSS Statistics, that is a software used to statistical analysis to create tables, graphs and other more complex analysis, was used to treat and elaborate the analyses that are presented in the results chapter. Excel was used in the beginning of data processing, since quantitative data were exported directly from google forms to excel. It was used to redefine the name of the variables that were later treated in the SPSS. During the analysis this program was used to create some graphs that are included in the data treatment.

Throughout the data collection quantitative, was possible to collect a final number of 420 questionnaires, which subsequently had to be processed in order to ensure that all of these data were valid. After a correct analysis of all questionnaires, it was necessary to eliminate 38 after it was understood that they were filled out incorrectly or that inconsistencies were detected in them. That said, only 382 questionnaires were analysed in order to ensure the validity and credibility of the results. Throughout the analysis, derived from the questionnaire design, the initial sample number was not analysed for each of the sections. This happens, since as the questionnaires progress, questionnaire submission orders were defined to safeguard the coherence of the dada. They were then not considered for processing data related to Instagram and Online Site Reviews, for individuals who responded that they did not resort to social media to search for information about hotels. Individuals who did not have an account on this communication channel were also excluded from the sample on Instagram. The same happened to Online Site Reviews, in which all those who had never consulted this type of websites were excluded from responding to this section.

Chapter 4

Conclusions and Contributions

4.1. Major research findings

In order to understand the influence of Social Media, particularly Instagram and Online Site Reviews, on the quality perception of hotel service units in the Generation Y consumers point of view, the previous present data was analysed. Further, will be present a conclusion that allows to answer each of the objectives defined at the beginning of the research, making it possible, to sum up, the major research findings.

According to the information collected through the quantitative instrument of this study, several conclusions will be then present. Firstly, it was found out that potential Generation Y customer is highly exposed to the content present on Social Media, once they resource daily to this channel of communication. It was also possible to find out that Social Media is used by the majority of the Gen Y individuals, to search information about hotel establishment and therefore, it has a relevant influence on its quality perception. Social media plays an important role in building opinions, influencing and change the quality perception of a Hotel establishment. This communication channel also plays the role of information search engine which allows consumers to find out all relevant information about hotels. Despite of that, it was not statistically proved that Social Media plays the most important role in building the perception of hotel establishments.

The second objective of this Thesis is to understand if there is a relevant influence of Social Media on quality perception, being possible to conclude that there is a relationship between these two variables. It was concluded, through the analysis of the data, that there is a significant majority of the Generation Y individuals, whose perception of quality has already been influenced to some extent by the contents perceived in Social Media, which confirms the idea present in the Literature Review that stat that millennials are "(…) easily influenced by social media" (Sima, 2016). It is important to notice that Gen Y individuals feel influenced by the perceived content, which highlights the influence of Social Media.

The third objective is to understand how individuals change their attitude towards a hotel unit service quality, after being exposed to the information on Social Media. This change in quality is related to the fact that the individual is predisposed to buy or influence the purchase of hotel service, after watching several digital contents. However, the statistical data was not

conclusive and therefore, it is not possible to infer whether the change in attitude is a direct consequence of the social media influence.

The conclusion regarding the first and the second objective confirms the first part of the idea present in the Literature Review that Social Media have become the main influencer of different aspects of costumer behaviour such as: the awareness, information acquisition, opinion, attitudes, purchase behaviour and post-purchase communication and evaluation (Mangold & Faulds, 2009), but the conclusion regarding objective number three is contrary to the idea present in the literature, since it was not possible to conclude that there was such a visible impact on purchase behaviour.

The fourth objective is the comparison between Instagram with Online Site Reviews in order to understand if there is one that stands out for having a greater influence on potential Generation Y consumers. It was possible, after analysing the data to state several conclusions regarding this objective. First, both Instagram and Online Site Reviews revealed to be quite well known and used by Gen Y, highlighting Instagram as the best known and most used. It was also possible to understand that there is an influence of the two social media networking sites. However, the impact is more evident on the part of Online Site Reviews. Considering the Social Media studied, it can also be concluded that potential consumers of Gen Y consider that they use Online Site Reviews as the first mean to shape their opinion. It was also proved, through statistical analysis that Online Site Reviews can change in the quality of hotel perception. The same was not true for Instagram. It was also investigated whether the influence of these two communication channels was relevant for the purchase of hotel services. It is inferred then that a significant percentage of the Gen Y has already purchased or has already influence the purchase of a Hotel service according to the content of Online Site Reviews which is not true for Instagram, this findings contradict what is present in the Literature that state that the images present on Instagram will have huge impact on costumers' purchasing behaviour, once it provide an opportunity to clients to imagine a visually the product before the purchase happen (Tuckman, 2012). To sum up, the influence of online site reviews is higher than of Instagram.

It was possible to conclude, regarding objective five that intends to find out if there are Generation Y1 or Y2 that are more influenced by Social Media, that both generations have a similar opinion regarding the influence of Social Media, highlighting the strongest evidence of this influence on Gen Y2.

The point of view of the hotel services' providers regarding the influence of Social Media on Generation Y quality perception, objective number six, was different from the results

obtained throughout the questionnaire. Considering the information collected through the qualitative instrument, it is possible to conclude that, Instagram, Facebook, and Online Site Reviews are the networking sites more used by the individuals of the Generation understudy. However, the hotel service's providers consider that Online Site Reviews has a huge impact on potential customers, being the image of a Hotel establishment and the first thing that they search when they want more information about a hotel, thus its management is crucial for Hotels. On the other hand, Instagram was considered, by the interviewees, the most popular social networking site and, therefore, has a huge influential potential on customers, due to its capacity to create awareness, interest and motivate them to search more information about it. The success of Hotel's Instagram profile is its coherent and authentic management. The idea that is present on the Literature that "be active, interesting, humble, unprofessional and honest in their social media activity" (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010), is essential to a successful communication between Hotel establishments and potential clients, is confirmed by the conclusions regarding the objective number six. Instagram and Online Site Reviews have a considerable impact on costumers' quality perception, but in different stages of the purchase process, being Online Site Reviews more relevant on the perception before the booking, and Instagram on maintaining the interest and the high perception during and after the booking. To conclude, it was possible to understand that even though it is hard to choose between the two channels of communication, the one that has a higher influence on costumers, Instagram is the most relevant due to its heavily use by Generation Y individuals.

4.2. Contributions to Research

The contribution that this dissertation leaves for the research is the inclusion of the study of the influence of social media in the quality perception of the individuals of Generation Y concerning a Hotel establishment, creating a division in sub generations according to the ownership or not financial independence. This influence was then studied in two sub-divisions, Generation Y1 and Generation Y2, the first being individuals who have their own income and the second individuals who function as influencers, since they are not financially.

4.3. Contributions to Management

Since this thesis present some findings, it is relevant to notice what are its contributions to management, in this specific case for managers at the level of Marketing and Communication departments of hotel units.

First, the role of influencer and opinion-maker that Social Media plays in the quality perception of generation Y customers is very important, making it crucial for Hotel units the development of a coherent, genuine and authentic management of their online networking platforms.

It is also significant to suggest that Hotels should investigate and invest in digital content to impact the quality perception of individuals since they do not have a direct influence in the willingness to buy a specific hotel service. Hotel management should also invest on Instagram content, despite of its lower impact compared to Online Site Reviews.

Chapter 5

Limitations and Suggestion for Future Research

In this Chapter, will be explored the limitations of this research and some suggestions for future researches.

It is important to highlight that the conclusions present in Chapter IV, should be then analysed bearing in mind that this research was exposed to some limitations mentioned before.

First, the reduced number of answers collected to the qualitative instrument can be explained once the data collection was done during a global pandemic, COVID 19, when the majority of hotels were closed and the availability of professionals to answer the interviews is lower.

Considering the quantitative instrument, some limitations arise. The sample size of the quantitative instrument was also affected by this pandemic atypical time, once the questionnaire was only distributed through Social Media and the initial idea was that the Hotels establishments could distribute the questionnaire among their Generation Y clients, This limitation does not allow the access to all Generation Y and Hotel services providers leading to some inconclusive data results. Still, concerning the questionnaire, and derived from the fact that the method of disclosing it was restricted, it was not possible to collect as much data from respondents from Generation Y1 as from Generation Y2, due to the incapacity to control this numbers.

Considering all the limitations of this study and some subjects that could be explored in further research, some suggestions for future research will be present below.

It can be interesting, for future research, to analyse which elements inside the Social Media and the digital world have a major impact on Generation Y's potential customers' quality perception about a hotel. It means to try to investigate deeply if it is Photos, Videos, testimonies, blogs, web forums, podcasting and online videos (vlogs), customer ratings, and evaluation systems among others, that have the higher impact on the customer's perception.

It could be interesting to study the comparative influence of Influencers Vs Online Site Reviews, in the quality perception of generation Y individuals, since this subject was not considerable developed in this research.

It is also suggested that, in future investigations, a study of a similar nature should be made, but comparing which Generations X, Y and Z, are most likely to be influenced by Instagram

and Online Site Reviews. This suggestion come from the idea that it would be interesting for Hotels to adapt their content to each generation needs.

Finally, it is suggested to explore deeply the other site of Social Media, the negative side and the negative consequences that it can bring to the image and reputation of hotel units.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A: The main theorical topic in the Literature Review

Reference	Research Context	Sample Design	Main Variables	Statistical Approach
McCarthy *et al.* (2010)	Travels Choice are being influenced by information present through Internet	Survey conducted to 2830 business and leisure Hotel costumers in United States	Social Media, Customer review, Business travellers, Leisure travellers and Hotel purchase decision.	Descriptive Analysis (SPSS)
Tsao *et al.* (2015)	**Study 1:** Influence of EWOM Valence and EWOM Quantity on booking intentions	Survey conducted to 142 Taiwaneses with experiences in browsing online hotel reviews and staying at hotel	EWOM Valence, EWOM Quantity and Purchase intention	ANOVA (Analysis of Variance)
	Study 2: Influence of Moderating effect of comformity on booking intentions	Survey conducted to 391 Taiwaneses with experiences in browsing online hotel reviews and staying at hotel	Conformity, EWOM Valence and Quantity and Purchase Intention	
Neuirotti *et al.* (2016)	Customers Reviews and value creation	Survey conducted to 240 Italian small and medium size hotels with presence on TripAdvisor	Online Visibility, Revenue Growth, Gross Profit and Net Profit	Regression Model
Tran *et al.* (2019)	The Influence of demographic factor and online rating on hotel choice	Interview conducted to 270 hotel consumers	Type of Hotel, Age, Income, Gender, Nationality and Online Rating	Asclogit

Appendix B: The main studies present in the Literature Review

Reference	Topic	Concept	Meaning
Holloway (1994)	Hotel Sector	Hotel Classification system	Distinguishes hotels according to certain physical features whereas grading identifies hotels based on certain verifiable objective features of the service offered.
Mota (2001)	Hospitality and Tourism Industry	Hotel Sector	Perceived as one of the most important activities of the tourism industry, since it can´t occur without hotel's existence.
Blackshaw & Nazarro (2004)	Web 2.0	Social Media	Describes a variety of new sources of online information that are created, initiated, circulated and used by consumers intent on educating each other about products, brands, services, personalities and issues.
O'Reilly (2007)	Social Media	Web 2.0	Sites and services that rely upon the generation of content by their users, as opposed to editors or dedicated content creators.
Quintas (2006)	Hotel Sector	Hotel	An establishment whose main objective is to provide, against payment, temporary accommodation to the public, also guaranteed, as a rule, other services such as food, drinks, entertainment, laundry, in an organized and integrated manner.
Duan et al. (2008)	Online Reviews	Awareness effect	(…) indicate that reviews convey the existence of the product and thereby put it in the choice set of consumers.
Duan et al. (2008)	Online Reviews	Persuasive effect	(…) to shape consumers ´attitudes and evaluation towards the product and ultimately influence their purchase decision.
Page (2009)	Tourism	Hospitality Industry	Involves hosting and hospitality, provided by a host and involving a guest.
Frommer (2010)	Social Media	Instagram	An online, mobile photo-sharing, video-sharing, and social network service that enables its users to take pictures and videos, and then share them on other platforms.
Mudambi & Schuff (2010)	Social Media	Online Reviews	(…) peer generated product evaluations posted on company or third-party websites.
O'Connor (2010)	Social Media	"The Social Media Management Continuum"	This strategy gives some advices to hotel managers about how the stages that they should follow in order to manage correctly social media, being them: monitorization, presence, activity and commitment
Brandão (2011)	Social Media	The horizontal Social Media	The ones that connects people, consisting of a network where you have friends who share likes and opinions on different subjects.
Brandão (2011)	Social Media	The vertical Social Media	Those that focus on the market and users connect in order to exchange opinions on issues of common interest.
Derecskei et al. (2017)	Society	Generation	The specific type of population cohort: it means a group of people who were born in the same year. As the members of a generation should live through demographically important events interlocked this way and frequency of occurrence of these events are comparable with factors affecting in time.
Veirman et al. (2017)	Social Media	Influencers	(…) influential users and stimulate them to endorse a brand or specific products through their social media activities.

Appendix C: Interview Script

Good Morning/Good Afternoon,

First of all, I would like to ask you if it would be possible to record the interview.

I would like to thank you once again for being available for this interview which will be very useful to finish my dissertation. As I told you in the first message I sent to you, my dissertation has as main objective to understand how social media, in this case online site reviews and Instagram, affect the perception of quality of a hotel service considering the individuals of generation Y (or the millenials). Then, in order to better understand how the hotel service provider also perceives the impact that social media has on customers, I would like to ask you some questions.

1. Is the Hotel establishment/Hotel chain where you work present on social networks? If so, which ones?

2. Which do you consider to be the social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blogs, online site reviews, etc) that have the most impact on potential customers?

3. In your opinion, what are the biggest advantages and disadvantages of hotel review sites? And how do they influence consumers' perceptions?

4. Do you consider that Instagram is currently an influencer of customers? Do you believe that photo-sharing has a significant influence today?

5. In the specific case of Millennials, what do you consider that, in the case of your hotel, influences them more, online reviews or Instagram?

These were the questions I would like to ask, if you want to add something feel totally at ease. I would like to thank you very much again for your help, which is very important for my work.

Appendix D: Questionnaire

The impact of Social Media: Instagram vs Online Site Reviews on Hotel' client quality perception by Generation Y

This questionnaire is part of a study that aims to complete the Master in Management at ISCTE - Instituto Universitário de Lisboa. This study aims to understand the influence that Social Media, in this particular case Instagram and Online Site Reviews, have on the perception of quality of a hotel' service by generation Y, that is, individuals born between 1981 and 2000.

In this way, I hereby request your cooperation, since it is essential to successfully complete my study. The anonymity and confidentiality of your answers are guaranteed, since they will be used exclusively for academic purposes. Feel free to answer the questions below honestly.

Any questions that arise or additional clarification about this study do not hesitate to contact me, either by email (carolinasgsneves@gmail.com) or by cell phone (911017562).

I thank you in advance for your help,

Carolina Neves

The impact of Social Media: Intagram vs Online Site Reviews on Hotel' client quality perception by Generation Y

Description (optional)

1. Sociodemographic profile

Description (optional)

1. Year of Birth *

☐ 1. 1981

☐ 2. 1982

☐ 3. 1983

☐ 4. 1984

- [ ] 5. 1985
- [ ] 6. 1986
- [ ] 7. 1987
- [ ] 8. 1988
- [ ] 9. 1989
- [ ] 10. 1990
- [ ] 11. 1991
- [ ] 12. 1992
- [ ] 13. 1993
- [ ] 14. 1994
- [ ] 15. 1995
- [ ] 16. 1996
- [ ] 17. 1997
- [ ] 18. 1998
- [ ] 19. 1999
- [ ] 20. 2000

2. Gender *

- [ ] 1. Female
- [ ] 2. Male
- [ ] 3. Other
- [ ] 4. I'd rather not say

3. Nationality *

- [ ] 1. Portuguese
- [ ] 2. Other

4. Current Occupation *

- [ ] 1. Student
- [ ] 2. Unemployed
- [ ] 3. Student Worker
- [ ] 4. Employee one's own
- [ ] 5. Employed on behalf of a third part
- [ ] 6. Part-time Worker

The impact of Social Media: Intagram vs Online Site Reviews on Hotel' client quality perception by Generation Y

Description (optional)

---

2. Use of Social Media - Generation Y1

Social Media is a comprehensive concept that includes a wide variety of online advertising, such as blogs, service rating sites, other sites, online review sites, forums, Internet discussion forums, moblogs, cyber communities, social networks, photo sharing sites and video sharing sites.

---

1. Do you use Social Media? *

1. Yes

2. No

---

2. How often do you use Social Media? *

- ◯ Daily
- ◯ Weekly
- ◯ Monthly

3. Which social media do you use most often? (Select a maximum of 3 options) *

☐ Facebook

☐ Instagram

☐ Twitter

☐ Websites Online Review

☐ Pinterest

☐ Blogs

☐ Forums

4. Have you used Social Media to search for information about Hotel services? *

1. Yes

2. No

5. Have you purchased any hotel services influenced by Social Media? *

1. Yes

2. No

6. Refer your level of agreement to the following information: *

	Completly disagree	Partly disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Partly agree	Completly agree
I use Social Media when I am planning on which hotel I will be staying on my next trip	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Social Media is the main way I use to make my decision regarding a hotel service	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

I feel influenced by the content that is present in social media	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My perception of quality regarding a hotel service has already changed after consulting information found in the social media	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section 4 of 9

The impact of Social Media: Intagram vs Online Site Reviews on Hotel' client quality perception by Generation Y

Description (optional)

3. Instagram - Generation Y1

Instagram is "a mobile online photo and video sharing service and a social network that allows its users to take photos and videos and share them".

1. Do you have an Instagram account? *

1. Sim

2. No

2. Have you found information about a hotel in your Instagram Feed ? *

1. Yes

2. No

3. Have you purchased any hotel services influenced by Instagram? *

1. Yes

2. No

4. State your level of agreement with the following information: *

	Completly disagree	Partly disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Partly agree	Completly agree
I am influenced by the content that is present on Instagram	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I usually follow Influencers and I am influenced by the content published by them	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I have already changed my perception of quality of a hotel service after having perceived content about them on Instagram	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Instagram is the main medium I use to make my decision regarding hotel establishments	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I am easily influenced by photos and videos of hotel establishments on Instagram	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

The impact of Social Media: Intagram vs Online Site Reviews on Hotel' client quality perception by Generation Y

Description (optional)

---

3. Online Site Reviews - Generation

Online site reviews are "product reviews generated by peers published on company or third party websites".

---

1. Have you consulted an Online Site Review? *

1. Yes

2. No

---

2. Which of the Online Site Reviews, listed below, are aware of and have already used   *

☐ TripAdvisor

☐ Facebook

☐ Google

☐ Booking.com

☐ Trivago

☐ Oyster

---

3. Have you purchased any hotel services influenced by Online Site Reviews? *

1. Yes

2. No

4.Refer your level of agreement to the following information: *

	Completly disagree	Partly disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Partly agree	Completly agree
I am influenced by the content that is present in the Online Site Reviews	○	○	○	○	○
I have already changed my perception of quality of a hotel service after having perceived content about them in Online Site Reviews	○	○	○	○	○
Online Site Reviews are the main means I use to make my decision regarding hotel establishments	○	○	○	○	○
The reviews on Online Site Reviews are relevant to my choice of a hotel establishment	○	○	○	○	○

Section 6 of 9

The impact of Social Media: Intagram vs Online Site Reviews on Hotel' client quality perception by Generation Y

Description (optional)

2. Use of Social Media - Generation

Social Media is a comprehensive concept that includes a wide variety of online advertising, such as blogs, service rating sites, other sites, online review sites, forums, Internet discussion forums, moblogs, cyber communities, social networks, photo sharing sites and video sharing sites.

1. Do you use Social Media? *

○ Yes

○ No

2. How often do you use Social Media? *

◯ Daily

◯ Weekly

◯ Monthly

⠿

3. Which social media do you use most often? (Select a maximum of 3 options) *

☐ Facebook

☐ Instagram

☐ Twitter

☐ Websites Online Reviews

☐ Pinterest

☐ Blogs

☐ Forums

4. Have you ever used Social Media sites to search for information about hotel establishments? *

1. Yes

2. No

5. Have you ever influenced someone (eg family, friends, colleagues) to buy a hotel service after having analyzed its content on Social Media?

1. Yes

2. No

6. Refer your level of agreement to the following information: *

	Completly disagree	Partly disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Partly agree	Completly agree
I use Social Media when I am planning on which hotel I will be staying on my next trip	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Social Media is the main way I use to make my decision regarding a hotel service	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel influenced by the content that is present in social media	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My perception of quality regarding a hotel service has already changed after consulting information found in the social media	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

The impact of Social Media: Intagram vs Online Site Reviews on Hotel' client quality perception by Generation Y

Description (optional)

3.Instagram - Generation Y2

Instagram is "a mobile online photo and video sharing service and a social network that allows its users to take photos and videos and share them".

1.Have an Instagram account? *

1. Yes

2. No

2. Have you found information about a hotel in your Instagram feed? *

1. Yes

2. No

3. Have you ever influenced someone (eg family, friends, colleagues) to buy a hotel service after *
having analyzed its content on Instagram?

1. Yes

2. No

4. State your level of agreement with the following information: *

	Completly disagree	Partly disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Partly agree	Completly agree
I am influenced by the content that is present on Instagram	○	○	○	○	○
I usually follow Influencers and I am influenced by the content published by them	○	○	○	○	○
I have already changed my perception of quality of a hotel service after having perceived content about them on Instagram	○	○	○	○	○
Instagram is the main medium I use to make my decision regarding hotel establishments	○	○	○	○	○
I am easily influenced by photos and videos of hotel establishments on Instagram	○	○	○	○	○

The impact of Social Media: Intagram vs Online Site Reviews on Hotel' client quality perception by Generation Y

Description (optional)

---

3. Online Site Reviews - Generation Y2

Online site reviews are "product reviews generated by peers published on company or third party websites".

---

1. Have you consulted an Online Site Review? *

1. Yes

2. No

---

2. Which of the Online Site Reviews, listed below, are aware of and have already used *

☐ TripAdvisor

☐ Facebook

☐ Google

☐ Booking.com

☐ Trivago

☐ Oyster

---

3. Have you ever influenced someone (eg family, friends, colleagues) to buy a hotel service after *
having analyzed the content related to it on the Online site Reviews?

◯ Yes

◯ No

4.Refer your level of agreement to the following information: *

	Completly disagree	Partly disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Partly agree	Completly agree
I am influenced by the content that is present in the Online Site Reviews	○	○	○	○	○
I have already changed my perception of quality of a hotel service after having perceived content about them in Online Site Reviews	○	○	○	○	○
Online Site Reviews are the main means I use to make my decision regarding hotel establishments	○	○	○	○	○
The reviews on Online Site Reviews are relevant to my choice of a hotel establishment	○	○	○	○	○

Section 9 of 9

The impact of Social Media: Intagram vs Online Site Reviews on Hotel' client quality perception by Generation Y

Thanks for your collaboration

Appendix E: Chronbach's alpha SPSS outputs

Reliability Statistics | Social Media impact (Gen Y1)

Cronbach's alpha	N of itens
,839	4

Reliability Statistics | Instagram Influence (Gen Y1)

Cronbach's alpha	N of itens
,815	5

Reliability Statistics | Online Site Reviews Influence (Gen Y1)

Cronbach's alpha	N of itens
,876	4

Reliability Statistics | Social Media impact (Gen Y2)

Cronbach's alpha	N of. itens
,774	4

Reliability Statistics | Instagram Influence (Gen Y2)

Cronbach's alpha	N of itens
,823	5

Reliability Statistics | Online Site Reviews Influence (Gen Y2)

Cronbach's alpha	N of itens
,820	4

Appendix F: Regularity in the use of Social Media Gen Y1 and Y2 SPSS outputs

Regularity in the use of Social Media (Gen Y1)

	N	%
	254	68,1%
Daily	117	31,4%
Weekly	2	0,5%

Regularity in the use of Social Media (Gen Y2)

	N	%
	119	31,9%
Daily	251	67,3%
Monthly	1	0,3%
Weekly	2	0,5%

Appendix G: Social Media impact – Likert- type scale questions SPSS Output

		I use Social Media when I am planning on which hotel I will be staying on my next trip (Gen Y1)"	Social Media is the main way I use to make my decision regarding a hotel service (Gen Y1)	I am influenced by the content that is present in Social Media (Gen Y1)"	My perception of quality regarding a hotel service has already changed after consulting information found in the social media (Gen Y1)"	I use Social Media Websites when I am planning which hotel I will be staying on my next trip (Gen Y2)"	Social Media is the main way I use to make my decision regarding a hotel service (Gen Y2)	I feel influenced by the content that is present in Social Media (Gen Y2)"	My perception of quality regarding a hotel service has already changed after consulting information found in social media (Gen Y2)
N	Válido	89	89	89	89	210	210	210	210
	Omisso	284	284	284	284	163	163	163	163
Média		3,60	2,76	3,82	3,54	4,23	3,23	4,07	3,72

Appendix H: Effective purchase of Instagram and Online Site Reviews SPSS Output

Have you purchased any hotel services influenced by Instagram? (Gen Y1)

	N	%
No	58	65,2
Yes	31	34,8

Have you purchased any hotel services influenced by Online Site Reviews? (Gen Y1)

	N	%
No	14	16,1
Yes	73	83,9

Have you ever influenced someone (eg family, friends, colleagues) to buy a hotel service after having analyzed its content on Instagram? (Gen Y2)

	N	%
No	128	61,5
Yes	80	38,5

Have you ever influenced someone (eg family, friends, colleagues) to buy a hotel service after having analyzed the content related to it on the Online site Reviews? (Gen Y2)"

		N	%
Válido	No	61	31,0
	Yes	136	69,0